Evangelical Christendom

"Unum Corpus sumus in Christo."

Jan.-Feb., 1939

The Inestimable Value of Prayer: A New Year Reminder*

By DR. D. MARTYN LLOYD-JONES

It is a very fine, a very wonderful thing, that a company such as this, gathered here this morning, should feel that one of its first actions in this new year should be to meet together in this particular way and manner to offer up our prayers and thanksgivings unto God Almighty.

It may be that some feel—and up to a point I am in sympathy with them—that the meeting should have been devoted exclusively to prayer. Yet I think we are told in many places in Scripture that our prayers must be ordered, that they must be thoughtful. That, I take it, is why it has been decided that an address should be delivered, in addition to the prayers that shall be offered.

Those of you who have seen the universal programme will have observed that the subjects for the different days' meetings for this Week of Prayer have been grouped and classified. This morning the general subject is "Thanksgiving, Confession and Prayer." On subsequent days other matters and subjects will be considered, such as "The Church Universal," "Nations and their Rulers," "Missions," "Home Life and Education," "Home Missions and the Salvation of the Jews."

This morning we are asked to concentrate on the general matter of "Thanksgiving, Confession and Prayer." Very briefly and very simply I propose and intend to adopt that classification, and just to say a few words under the three separate headings.

"Thanksgiving." Surely the first thing for which we have to thank God is for the very fact of prayer at all. We should thank God for the fact that it is possible for us to pray. Perhaps we are more acutely aware of that blessing at such a time as this than we have been for many a long year. We have but to cast our minds back to those terrible trying days of crisis in September to remind ourselves anew and afresh of the inestimable value of prayer. It is not a mere escape mechanism; it does not mean that we just turn our backs for a moment upon the difficulty and the crisis. Prayer which is really worthy of the name means a consciousness within the soul of being in contact and in communion with "the Father of lights, with Whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

We ought to thank God for prayer itself, the possibility of prayer, before we begin to particularise with respect to the precise nature and content of our prayer. And as we face another year, a year which will undoubtedly have its difficulties, trials and problems, is it not enough in itself that we shall realise that whatever may come to pass, we can always pray, and that we are called upon to pray without ceasing?

But there are various other matters for which we should thank God. We are reminded here that we should thank God "for the redeeming grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. For God's sustaining mercy, especially in times of distress. For all opportunities of Christian service" And surely it is a good thing that we Christian people should remind ourselves and remind one another again of what exactly it is we have received through our Lord and Saviour Jesus

* Address delivered at the Mansion House, London, on Monday, January 1st, 1939, in connection with the Universal Week of Prayer.

Christ. What a wonderful thing it is to have an assurance and a knowledge of sins forgiven, of peace with God, and of an everlasting hope of eternal bliss. We can never count our blessings too frequently. Let us do so as a body of Christian people at the commencement of another year.

But I personally—and after all, one can only speak in a personal sense, even though one deals with the general subject—I personally at the present time feel more inclined to thank God for having given us that unique and marvellous revelation of His plan and scheme of Salvation which we have in the Word of God which we call the Bible.

I want to draw a distinction between a subjective knowledge and that objective revelation. We all know what it is to be assailed by doubt, by scepticism and by fears; and when we look at things merely in this subjective fashion, we shall perhaps at times begin to wonder whether there is a foundation. And when we look at the Church and see her despised and derided, persecuted in certain countries, patronised in other countries, and as we see the masses living a hopeless and thoughtless life, we may at times be led to wonder what is to be the future of the Church of God on earth. There is but one antidote for such thoughts, and that is the Word of God, where we are reminded that the plan is a plan which was made before the foundation of the world; that away back in eternity, before time, God planned out everything; that He has decreed what is to come to pass, and that His will shall be done in spite of men, and, indeed, in spite of the very gates of Hell itself.

I do thank God increasingly for the consciousness and the increasing realisation of the plan and the scheme of Salvation, both individual and for the whole world, as it is to be found in the Word of God.

There are therefore some general matters like that for which we can give our thanksgiving to God, especially at this time; but there are just one or two particular matters which I feel I must mention, because I am sure they are present in many minds and hearts this morning.

Surely we all want to thank God again that we still enjoy the blessings of peace. Though there are wars and rumours of wars in the world, in a very remarkable manner we were delivered from another European war; and we can never thank God too much for that. The more we look back upon it, the more we realise that we were spared alone by the mercy of God. It was not that we deserved it, or merited it: it was that God in His infinite loving kindness and compassion spared us and delivered us according to the counsel of His own will.

Another particular matter for which I feel we should thank God is that there are so many signs in the thought and thinking processes of mankind to-day that the old easy complacency is gradually being undermined and is gradually passing. I mean by that that mankind is beginning to show at last that it does realise that after all, man cannot save himself. We all remember something of that optimism which prevailed in this country not only in the end of the last century and in the early years of this, but even after the War, when men thought certain institutions, like the League of Nations, were bound to banish war for ever, and when many thought that man, merely by devising and scheming, could find a way to solve all his problems—that easy optimism, that assurance of mankind that did away with the Gospel and the need of the intervention of God at all. I say it is a very gratifying thing to find that the world is beginning to doubt its own power, that the world is increasingly realising that *man* cannot save mankind; that even as the result of bitter experience, such as the experience of last year, men are beginning to get back once more what we may call the tragic sense of life. I think we must thank God for that, those of us who are Christians, that the world does seem to be realising once more that there is such a thing as sin, that the very nature of man is perverted, and that wars arise out of the lusts that are in men. I think we must thank God for this increasing realisation of the fact of sin, the essential sinfulness of humanity, and the need of an action from above to rescue us from the havoc that we make of our own world. I may put that still more generally by saying that we should thank God for evidences and signs and tokens of an increasing return to a belief in the eternal verities that were emphasised at the Protestant Reformation. I think we must thank God for an increasing sense of the sovereignty of God and the sinfulness of man; of Justification by Faith

only; the need of preaching rather than the need of certain priestly actions. There is increasing evidence, I say, that mankind is returning to the great emphases of that Protestant Reformation. It is something for which all Christian people should thank God, and thank Him profoundly.

But may I say a word under this second head of *Confession?* There are unfortunately, alas! so many matters concerning which we must confess our failure. We need to confess that we have too often failed in our witness for Christ, that we have failed in our practice of prayer. Is there anyone who would like to claim that he or she is not guilty of these things? Alas! when we examine ourselves we find this failure in these respects and in many others. We fail to keep our resolutions; we fail to put into actual practice the things we know we ought to do and the things we know we ought to be.

Surely one of our besetting sins as Christians—and, if I may say so, as Evangelicals—is our tendency not only to slothfulness in general, but our tendency to self-satisfaction, a kind of spiritual smugness, a tendency to think that because our position and doctrine are right, we can rest upon our oars and be content with our state and condition precisely as it is. I do feel that this is one of the great curses of the position to-day—the smugness, the self-satisfaction of people who are Evangelical in their doctrine.

But again for me to particularise, I feel we have to confess to God with shame the fact that our Christian lives and our Christian experience fluctuate so much. Oh! that we could always be in the frame of mind that characterised us, perhaps, in that week of crisis in September. Is it not a tragedy that there has to be a sort of crisis from outside really to make us the men and women we ought to be? Our spiritual lives are too dependent upon outward circumstances. They vary and fluctuate too much according to conditions that are external. God grant us grace to be more steady in our lives, to be more steadfast, to be more consistent in our spiritual exercises.

Another thing I think we need to confess as a failing and a fault is that we allow this world to grip us too much, and fail to realise that after all, our life in this world is nothing but a pilgrimage and a journey. As we read the Bible, again we see that this is the view of life that was held by the saints throughout all those ages. And as we read of the Puritan era and other periods in the life of this country we find men who viewed life in the same detached manner, merely as a pilgrimage. We are far too comfortable and settled, and think only of England, our own particular country, and forget that people in every country are merely pilgrims and sojourners. I am not decrying in any way the value of nationality, but as Christians we are first and foremost pilgrims of eternity, set in our different countries to work out the will of God.

Another respect in which I think we need to confess failure is that far too often, even in connection with our Christian work, we have forgotten that everything has to be done for the honour and glory of God. How far we are prone to be content with our own sermons and addresses, or our movements and their success, our campaign and its results, our denomination and its achievements? In our Christian work we are content to be satisfied with things that are smaller and lesser, and fail to remember that everything that is done should be done for one reason only—the glory of God and the proclamation of His holy name.

Thirdly, what is it that we have to *pray* for? We have to pray that our faults and blemishes may be removed. We have to pray for a new vision of life and its purpose, as outlined in the Bible. Above everything else we have to pray for a mighty spiritual revival and re-awakening. God grant that in this year 1939 we may be the witnesses of a new spiritual awakening in the Church, the Church universal, in every land and in every clime, such as has not been witnessed for many a long day. Indeed, I feel that our prayers are perfectly summed up in that prayer which St. Paul tells us that he was offering for the church at Ephesus, "that the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, ye may know what is the hope of His Calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints," and above all, "the mighty power of God which is working in and for us who believe."

God grant an answer to these prayers for His own eternal honour and glory, for Christ's sake. Amen.

Headquarters Notes

We wish to thank numerous friends, some overseas, who have written to express their appreciation of EVANGELICAL CHRISTENDOM. Modesty forbids the publication of some of these communications! We are also most grateful and thankful to receive one order for no less than one thousand copies of the magazine (per issue) during 1939, for distribution throughout Scotland.

Anti-Semitism in Germany.—We quote the Resolution of the Executive Council of the Alliance on the subject of the persecution of the Jews in Germany, and are glad to be able to add to this the reply of the Chief Rabbi, Dr. Hertz:—

"*Resolution.*—The Council of the World's Evangelical Alliance shares the widespread concern and sorrow with which the whole British nation, in common with peoples of other civilised countries, have learned of the barbarous violence and cruel legislation inflicted upon the Jews in Germany. They desire to assure the Jewish people as a whole, through the Chief Rabbi in London, of the deep and heart-felt sympathy with them in their travail and sorrows at this time, and themselves remembering all Jewry in prayer before Jehovah, their God and ours, call upon all Christians everywhere to pray unceasingly at this time for God's ancient people. The Council further pledge themselves to do anything possible through the World's Evangelical Alliance to relieve the shocking plight of the Jewish refugees, and express the hope that His Majesty's Government will offer the widest possible asylum to these refugees in parts of the British Empire, and thus help to alleviate the sorrows of these persecuted people suffering for no other reason than their race."

"Office of the Chief Rabbi,
4, St. James's Place,
Aldgate,
London, E.C.3.
January 22nd, 1939

"Dear Sir,

"I am indeed touched by your letter of November 25th last, conveying to me, on behalf of the Council of the World's Evangelical Alliance, their deep horror of the suffering inflicted on the Jewish people throughout Germany.

"In the agony through which hundreds of thousands of my co-religionists are now passing, it is fortifying to read your strong repudiation of all persecution and your deep sympathy with the heart-rending plight of the refugees.

"I should be glad if you would kindly convey to the Council the deep-felt thanks of my community.

"I have the honour to be,
Yours sincerely,
J. H. HERTZ, *Chief Rabbi.*"

To the General Secretary,
World's Evangelical Alliance,
19, Russell Sq., London, W.C.1

Tambaram, 1938.—Under "World Mission Notes" we give the message cabled to the World Missionary Conference in meeting at Tambaram, Madras, India, and the reply of Dr. John R. Mott, Chairman of the Conference. Attention is also drawn to the illuminating address (given during the Week of Prayer) on the subject of this Conference, which will be found on pages 10—12.

The B.B.C. and Religious Programmes.—A considerable correspondence is reaching Headquarters on the subject of the religious programmes arranged by the B.B.C. On page 35 a special note on the subject of Astrology draws attention to and advises further protests against this type of broadcasting as (we believe) now intended by the B.B.C. Returning to the religious programmes, it is indefensible that the 9.30 a.m. service on Sunday mornings should on any occasion be restricted to a single Roman Catholic service. This is a subject which is causing much apprehension. We advise the widest possible representations in writing to the Director of Religious Programmes, Broadcasting House, London, W.1. Then there is growing feeling that the religious talks and sermons, as delivered in the Sunday (8—8.45 p.m.) services, are too academic and generally drawn from speakers who present weakness in the evangelistic appeal. These are some of the points in the correspondence referred to. We can only advise direct appeal to the B.B.C., as

advised above and on page 35. In every letter be courteous, even if direct and insistent, and the greater the spread of influence behind the appeal, the greater the impression likely to be made in Broadcasting House.

This Month's Good Cause.—We have no one to broadcast for the World's Evangelical Alliance an appeal (similar to that recently broadcast by Lord Baldwin) for its Alliance House in Russell Square. In our case, until we are nearer the centenary of the Alliance, the appeal is not for a new and, we might hope, a freehold building, but for a modest sum, £2,200 in all, to enable the Council to carry out essential renovations and to extend the lease of the present Alliance House for sixteen years, until 1955. The following letter is being sent to members and subscribers who have not so far responded to the Council's appeal for the sum mentioned. In prayer and faith we desire to commend the statement and final appeal to all our readers. After all, the Alliance cannot continue its beneficent and important work without a home and headquarters. It is now twenty-five years since any kind of appeal was made for generous help in this connection. Here is the Appeal:—

Alliance House,
19, Russell Square,
London, W.C.1.
January 31st, 1939

Dear Friend,

Except for concessions which have been made by representatives of the Duke of Bedford for an extension of the lease of the Alliance House (which expires on March 25th next), the Alliance and all its interests would be *homeless* on that date. What has been arranged is temporary, but it permits of at least a further sixteen years' tenancy, under conditions. These conditions necessitate an essential expenditure of at least £2,000 (in fact, we now find that altogether a sum of £2.200 must be involved). I enclose a list of the first contributors, from which you will see that the appeal issued by the Council in April last has so far realised £1,241 of the amount required.

We still need £959. It is not possible in writing to explain all that depends upon raising this sum, *if possible before March 25th next.* We have no reserve funds to draw on; we must and do "lift up our eyes unto the hills" from whence cometh our help.

In this crisis in the home and headquarters of the national and international work of the Alliance, we can and do believe that God, in answer to prayer, will send us what is needed, and possibly more. In this faith and hope I appeal to you to send a special gift for the Alliance House Fund.

There are those who can give larger sums, and these are required and appealed for; but if everyone to whom this letter is addressed will undertake to send at least £1, or alternatively promise to raise not less than this sum within the next two months, we shall be able to convene a meeting for thanksgiving to the God of all grace. *Will you then help us?*

On behalf of the Council,
I am, yours sincerely,
H. M. Gooch,
General Secretary.

Czech Protestant Churches Relief Fund.—The Council cordially acknowledge all gifts received for this Fund, which, we are glad to report, has been augmented by a single gift of £5,000, allocated and paid over to our appointed representative in Prague, from the Mansion House Fund. In acknowledging this gift and help on behalf of the Synod of the Church of the Czech Brethren, Dr. Bednar writes:—

"At last I am able to fulfil my duty and to send you a few words of gratitude for the great work you are doing for our suffering country and churches. God bless you and all your activities! We cannot express more than our thanks. God has all in His power, and we pray that He may enrich you fully in all spheres of your life and work. Some days after your letter, I received an invitation to visit Sir Ronald Macleay in his office, and he handed me a cheque for £5,000 for the aid of our refugees. I know that this great help is a response to your very kind intervention, and it is my Christian duty to express, on behalf of our brethren, the Czech Protestants, our deep gratitude. You have proved your Christian feelings."

Since the above letter was received, we have learned that during the current year, 1939, a sum of at least £36,000 will be required by the Czech Protestants for refugee work, distinct from church buildings

and the reconstruction of church work in affected areas. The needs for this latter work will be (as computed) £11,000.

Spanish Protestant Relief Fund.—As we go to press the news from Barcelona is disturbing and distressing. Our readers will be glad to know that, through the Spanish Protestant Relief Fund (which is operated through the World's Evangelical Alliance, the Spanish Evangelical Alliance and the Committee on Co-operation in Spain and Portugal), an eleventh consignment of food for distribution to some 1,800 members of Protestant churches in Barcelona was provided as late as January 16th. Despite the recent events, every effort will be made to send further help as the situation allows. The needs of Madrid, Valencia, and other parts of Spain remain as before, only intensified by the scarcity of food and the winter weather. Let us do all we can while we can, and let prayer on behalf of our brethren in Spain be made unceasingly to God. The article which appears on another page, "Spiritual Revival in Spain," should be an uplift and an incentive to fresh sacrifice and service in Spanish evangelisation.

Universal Week of Prayer.—A never-to-be-forgotten Week of Prayer closed on January 8th. A good deal concerning it will be found in this issue of EVANGELICAL CHRISTENDOM, and there will be further Reports in our next. The London meetings commenced with a memorable meeting at the Mansion House, when the Archdeacon of London presided in the unavoidable absence of the Lord Mayor. The address given by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones appears on other pages. Some four hundred people attended this gathering, including representatives of the Churches and numerous religious and philanthropic organisations. It was throughout an inspiriting occasion, and behind was the knowledge that some fifty and more Lord Mayors and Mayors throughout the United Kingdom had arranged similar gatherings, or were themselves taking part in the local Week of Prayer. The tide flows on, and is immeasurable, as is the blessing God bestows upon this hallowed Week of Prayer. We thank all, at home and abroad, who have in any way co-operated to make the Universal Week of Prayer, 1939, a spiritual festival.

Common Prayer

"Ye also, helping together by Prayer."
"Unto Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all we ask or think."

LET US GIVE THANKS—

For the Divine assurance "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble"—and the Divine promise, "As thy days so shall thy strength be."

For the spiritual results known and unknown of the Universal Week of Prayer, more widely observed than in any previous year.

For the abiding Presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church and its members individually, and for the promise "He shall guide you into all truth."

LET US PRAY—

That the Jews suffering persecution in Germany and other countries of Europe may be comforted by Jehovah Nissi, the LORD their banner; and that all efforts for their relief may help to lead them to their true Messiah.

That the blessing of God may rest upon all efforts to give to refugees in this and other countries the comfort of the Gospel of peace and the assurance of Salvation through the Prince of Peace.

For all Protestant believers in Spain, and that this distraught country may yet know peace and tranquillity, with the blessing of religious liberty. Pray for the children of Spain.

Let us ask that in our own country there may be more witness to righteousness, which exalteth a nation; and more desire for spiritual values than mechanical processes of unity in all departments of national life.

That the work of the World's Evangelical Alliance may continue to prove the power of the Gospel and the moral and spiritual effects of unity and co-operation—"the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

We ask prayer that all the financial needs of the Alliance may be met, in view of the financial year which closes on March 31st; and especially that the funds necessary to assure a home for the Alliance may be forthcoming on or before that date.

Spiritual Awakening in Poland

Progress of the First Bible School in Poland

SPIRITUAL awakening is coming to Poland, and is advancing into the heart of this great country, which numbers a population of nearly thirty-five million people, and covers an area of some 150,000 square miles. The large majority of the inhabitants are Roman Catholics, but there are at least three millions of Protestants, and one in every ten of the population is a Jew. Beginning with the Independence of Poland, in 1918, the spiritual awakening has extended, and its influence is felt perhaps more on the far-flung Eastern borders of Poland, and in the south where the Ukrainians are to be found in large numbers, and probably number as many as seven or eight millions.

THE ALLIANCE BIBLE SCHOOL, WARSAW, POLAND.
Group of the eleven students at present in training.

Alliance for Co-operation

For some years the World's Evangelical Alliance has been offering its assistance to the Polish Evangelical Churches, which has been cordially accepted, and the Polish Evangelical Alliance is to-day in Warsaw, as in other towns of Poland, an influence as well as an active force for Christian union and co-operation. This progress necessitated a brief visit to Warsaw by the General Secretary of the British organisation, and Mr. Gooch has lately returned after fulfilling a programme which had been prepared, and which included conferences with representatives of the Protestant Churches as a whole, and with others representing various organisations and interests of evangelisation in Poland.

Mr. Gooch reports a gracious work of God proceeding among Jews and Gentiles alike. It would seem as if their present anxieties are leading to intensified effort, and among the Jews themselves, to new and unusual evidence of their desire to hear and receive the

Word of God, and to share the hospitality and fellowship of the missionary bodies in Warsaw, and other parts of Poland, devoting themselves to Jewish missionary work. This was especially noticeable in Warsaw at the Mission House of the Church Missions to Jews, where Mr. Gooch stayed with the Rev. Martin Parsons, the Superintendent of the Mission, and British chaplain. Day by day it was evident that among old and young alike opportunities hitherto unknown were being taken advantage of, and the numerous classes and services are being attended with ever increasing hopes and glad evidences of conversions.

Eleven Students

Some fifteen months ago the first Polish Bible School was established in Warsaw, under the auspices of the Evangelical Alliance. This school has grown so that at present there are eleven young students, mainly coming from the Ukraine and Volhynia, and other border districts of Eastern Poland. There is a nucleus of eager candidates, but it has been thought best to start off with a humble beginning, although it must be understood that progress and expansion only wait upon funds, so necessary, as the students are unable to pay fees, or even to contribute in any appreciable sense to their own board and lodging during tuition.

The school has recently moved into new premises, where Mr. Gooch had the privilege of speaking to the students on more than one occasion, and of coming into official and friendly touch by addressing them and others assembled at the first anniversary gathering which was held in Warsaw on Sunday evening, December 4th. Mr. Gooch has returned to London hoping that the appeal for an initial sum of £1,000 to finance this Bible School will be successful, and is sure that this sum can be economically used to further the training of those already enrolled, and others waiting to be received, so that after training they may go out to the regions beyond Warsaw, where millions are waiting, anxious to receive the Word of God, to read it for themselves, and to be shepherded in that faith and fear which belong only to the Gospel of Christ in its fullness and fellowship.

In order to continue and develop the work of the Bible School in Poland, the help of Christian friends is essential and appealed for, in England and Scotland, in lands where Evangelicals are more favourably situated than in Poland, and other countries, including Canada and the United States of America.

At present there are no settled funds and no promised support. The Council of the World's Evangelical Alliance (British Organisation) made a preliminary grant of £50 in the hope that the Lord will lay the needs of the Bible School in Poland upon the hearts of His children everywhere, and move them to help with freewill gifts.

"I cannot recollect the time when I did not privately read, morning and evening, some verses of the Bible and pray to God. This habit I have maintained throughout my life. In this way I have read the Bible through many times. The Bible knowledge thus gained has been of inestimable advantage. The Bible rises in complete view to my mind, and in reading modern criticism thorough as is the examination of the verses under discussion, I am struck with the lack of power to see the innumerable strands of thought and purpose which run through the whole, and make the conclusions of the critics untenable. Such criticism is common sense left out.

"From childhood to old age never a doubt has crossed my mind as to the Bible being the Word of God, and every statement in it being useful for some purpose or other. Much of my secular education I have been obliged to unlearn or correct; but despite the books I have read by scholarly critics and apologetic clergy, I remain convinced that the Bible is the only book in the world that builds character in the people, and gives permanent existence to the nation. Nations are strong and prospering in exact proportion as the fear of God and Bible standards of right and wrong are in the hearts of the people."

The late SIR ANDREW WINGATE, K.C.I.E.

Spanish Protestant Relief Fund

We have received the following simple but touching expression of thanks to all who have helped (so far) to send eleven consignments of foodstuffs to the Spanish Protestants. All these consignments have arrived safely. The Committee acknowledge with warm thanks the co-operation of the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief and the Friends' Service Council in forwarding the goods to Spain.

GRATITUD

A los hermanos que contribuyeron al envío de víveres de la Alianza Evangélica de Londres.

Los hermanos de Inglaterra
Nos aman de corazón
Y al ver que estamos en guerra
Nos ayudan con tesón,
Con los bienes de la tierra
Y también por la oración.

En estos tristes momentos
De penuria y aflicción
Llegan vuestros alimentos
A los hogares hambrientos,
Siendo motivo de aliento
Y de gran consolación.

Al ver hermanos queridos
Vuestro amor y abnegación
Mandándonos tantas veces
Tan eficaz provisión,
Elevamos nuestras preces
A Dios por tal bendición.

Pidámosle que la guerra
Pronto termine
Y a los santos de Inglaterra
Nos sea dable mostrar
Nuestra gratitud sincera.
Cómo? Obrando lo que hiciera
A Dios y a ustedes gozar.

Y si a Cristo acá en el suelo
No podemos mas servir
Porque venga la mentralla
Nuestros cuerpos a destruir;
Sabemos que allá en el Cielo
Libres de pena y dolor
En las Bodas del Cordero
Se renovará el amor.

ELVIRA V. MASSANA.

THANKS

To the brethren who contributed to the "Spanish Protestant Relief Fund," 19, Russell Square, London.

The dear brethren of England
Are loving us with their hearts,
And seeing we suffer war
They do help us with endeavour
Both with their earthly goods
As well as by their prayers.

In those infortunated moments
Of penury and sad affliction
Your foodstuffs arrive
To homes empty of food and hungry,
Bringing courage and consolation
Unto a great lot of God's sons.

When we see, our dear brethren,
Your love and abnegation,
Having sent several times
So useful and precious provision,
We raise our sincerest praises
To God for such a benediction.

Let us pray that this cruel war
May be finished very soon,
And that we may be able then
To prove to the saints of England
Our heartiest gratitude.
How? By doing the things
Which make God and you rejoice.

And if it were impossible
To do so here down on earth,
Because shells would arrive suddenly
To cut our lives, not ours
We are sure that up in Heaven,
Free from every pain and sorrow,
At the Feast of God's the Lamb,
Brotherly love will be renewed.

ELVIRA V. MASSANA.
(Free translation by S. Vila.)

The authoress of this poetry is an old lady of seventy, having been an evangelical for forty-eight years, and a voluntary worker in Spain. Just now, during the difficult times of revolution and war, she has had the joy of seeing many remarkable conversions (some twenty in number) at the Manresa Baptist Church, near to Barcelona, of which church she is a deaconess, in the absence of the pastor—forced to be engaged in war.

The poetry was inspired at the sight of the impression produced on believers on the arrival of a consignment of foodstuffs from the Spanish Protestant Relief Fund, in co-operation with the Evangelical Alliance. Some break into weepings seeing such abundance of things until now inaccessible to our people, which reminded them of the good times of peace. Some others shouted and embraced one another, full of joy for such a blessing. A single consignment included tins of condensed milk, tins of brawn, corned beef, salted fish, sugar, haricot beans, bacon, and soup cubes, distributed to 1,800 members of the Protestant Churches in one province alone. In all, eleven consignments have been sent to Spain, the value of which has been over £3,000.

The Evangelical Implications of Tambaram*

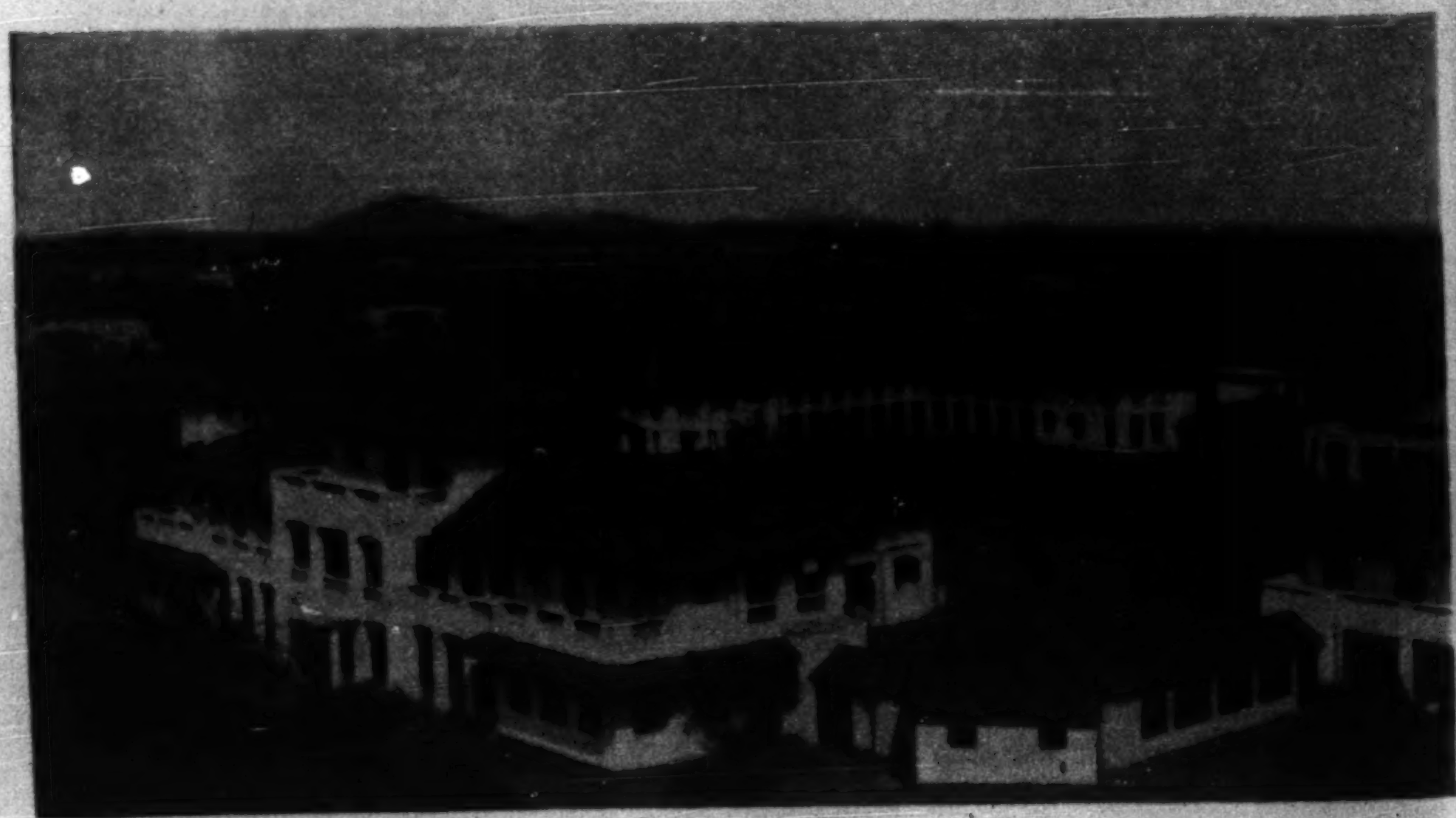
By the REV. T. COCKER BROWN, B.A., B.D.

(Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society)

It is inevitable and very fitting that our thoughts around the universal topic for our prayers to-day, "The Church Universal," should turn to that great Conference at Tambaram. Each of those who have offered prayer have mentioned that central focus, and I suppose it is the most significant thing that has happened during the past month: infinitely more significant than the result of those ghastly battles being fought in Spain; infinitely more significant than the terms that Japan may offer to China, and that China may or may not accept; infinitely more significant than the number of submarine keels that Germany or Britain or France may lay down during these next few months. The fact that God has called together from all over the world representatives of His Church—which is to-day a universal Church—is a fact of infinite significance, and a fact for which we are right to thank God from the bottom of our hearts.

The delegates to the Tambaram Conference will be scattering to-day. To many of them we know this Conference has been a time of great inspiration and uplift. It has been more to some of them: it has laid a necessity upon their hearts which is going to be a very costly thing to them in their life and work during the next few years. But this I know: they will all go on their way from Tambaram to the far corners of the earth with a song of praise and thanksgiving in their hearts, a song in which we may join.

*Address delivered at the Church Missionary Society House, on Tuesday, January 3rd, in connection with the Universal Week of Prayer.



TAMBARAM, MADRAS [Photograph: Rev. A. G. Hogg

Even if it be punctuated by the boom of guns and the ghastly crash of aerial bombs, these cannot quench the song which will be in every heart.

But there is much more than a song in Tambaram: it is a great message for the world to-day. We shall not know for a few days, perhaps for a few weeks, just what that message is, because it takes time for the message to crystalize out clearly, so that we may know it fully. But there are two things, I am quite sure, that will be in that message. The first is that there has come a fresh call to the Church. That call has come from the Mission Field time and again, and it very fittingly comes from the Mission Field once more: a call to the Church to unity of spirit, but more than spirit—to act, and perhaps to organization; a call to the Church to be one in its activities, even as it is one in its loyalty to one great Lord.

Then I think the supreme message of Tambaram will be a clarion call to the Church to a fresh outburst, shall we say, of vital witness to a world that needs God and His Christ.

They will be very troubled about the Church in Tambaram. They have been in these days, I am quite sure. A Church that is threatened with such dangers in one place and another over the world's surface to-day is a Church about which a Conference of this sort must be troubled. The Church in Germany and in Korea and half a dozen other places of which we can think is passing through times of critical danger, set upon by enemies: not only those enemies who can attack it by physical means of violence, but who can attack it by a thousand cunningly devised, very effective weapons not of a material, but of a spiritual warfare. The Church in its outward aspects is passing through a very critical time, and I am quite sure that the Conference at Tambaram has been troubled for the Church.

But there are grimmer and more tragic facts than those. We have to be realistic. It is no good for people like ourselves to be other than realistic. It is no good being sentimental. We know the type of Churches from which these delegates have gone. We know their weakness; we know the infidelity of some of them; we know the conditions that weaken them; we know of a dozen sins that make them less than the Churches that God meant them to be. We know our own Churches, and we know that the greatest danger to the Church to-day is not those attacks from without, but the things that attack the life of the Church from within. We know them and we have to face them. It is no good blinking the fact: we have to face the fact that the Church to-day, though it be a universal Church, is a Church tragically weak, tragically sinful and tragically unfaithful to the great task to which God has called it.

So I am quite sure that those delegates who gathered together in Tambaram will have been troubled about the Church. Perhaps they will have been troubled more than anything by this fact, that in these last few years, this last decade or two, the confidence, courage and faith of the Church have been shaken, so that the Church to-day, the universal Church of God, that goes forward, is not the strong, courageous, confident thing that it should be, but a rather timid, rather fearful, rather apologetic group of people. It is from that danger that the Conference has prayed, I am quite sure, that God would deliver His Church.

You remember that incident in the Church's history, one of the greatest of the prophets of all time, Elijah, had run away like a scared rabbit in the face of his enemies. He had just bolted, got nerves and run away. You remember the word that came to him in the cave at Mount Horeb: no word of comfort; just one thing and one thing alone—to get back to the job that he had left. That is the message that will come to us from Tambaram, I am certain: a message to us to get back to the one job which God has committed to us, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ; to remember the infinitely precious deposit of Truth that He has committed to us; a deposit of Truth that is infinitely precious not to us alone, but to the whole world, the one thing that can save the world from its present disasters and danger.

It is a gracious and a beautiful thing that God should have committed to us this deposit of Truth. But it is as dangerous for us to walk about the world with the Evangel of Christ in our hearts unpreached as it would be to go about to put out a fire with a bag of gunpowder in our hand. Perhaps that is not a very good simile, for, of course, we are dealing with a living

organism. A living organism that is not performing its due function as a living thing is in danger of debility, disease and death. A Church charged with the infinitely precious, infinitely powerful, infinitely effective Gospel of Jesus Christ unused, is a Church in infinite danger of debility, disease and death. So the call is coming to the Church again in these days to go back to that task which God has laid upon it to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, the glorious Gospel of the blessed God.

I have been reading that remarkable book of Professor Kraemer's. You will not agree with all of it—of course not. I do not believe he expects us to. I certainly do not pretend to understand or agree with it all; but there is one thing in it that we shall all understand, and that is his call to the Church to go back to preach the central things that God has committed to her: the realistic Gospel of the presence of God in this world of His; God and His lordship over life; God and the supremacy of His Divine will; God and His Christ; the gracious Jesus of history; Christ crucified and Christ risen and living to-day. These are the things that we, each with our varying emphases, are called to take to the world to-day: the only thing we are called on to do.

It is not a lack of faith that makes one doubt whether Tambaram will present to the Church a unified body of doctrine. I do not believe it will. The Holy Spirit never has presented a unified body of doctrine to the Church: I mean a doctrine that we should all preach in the same terms. After all, Peter and James and Paul and John did not preach quite in the same shades of thought and with quite the same emphasis. There is a very considerable difference between, shall we say, Jeremiah and Amos: yet they were both prophets charged with the great and glorious Gospel of God.

So one does not expect, I say—not from a lack of faith, but from a recognition of the nature of things—that that great Conference at Tambaram will present us with a unified body of doctrine, but it will present us with a unified challenge of the Holy Spirit of God to do that thing that God has set us to do—to preach the infinitely precious deposit of truth that is committed to us. Just as for Elijah there was one hope and one hope alone of salvation, so also is there only one hope for the Church. He was in danger then of going to pieces, as the Church has been in danger during the last ten or twenty years. Thank God she is passing out of that danger in the sense of this new call that has come to her. But just as the only way to safety, the only hope of salvation to Elijah was to listen to the call of God to go back to the job from which he had run away, so the only hope of salvation for the Church to-day, the only hope of health, of courage, of new faith, of new vigour, of new confidence, is to listen to the call that will be coming to us again from the Mission Field, from those younger Churches, from representatives of the great universal Church gathered together to consider its supreme function, its missionary task. Our hope as a Church, our one hope, is to listen to the call that will come from those gathered together under the guidance of the Spirit of God to go back to the job for which God created His Church, for which He sanctified it, for which Christ came to earth to suffer that it might live.

"The inalienable right of every human soul in all the wide world is to have the open Bible. The very first thing a Protestant missionary does upon entering a new country is to translate the Bible into the language of that people—the last thing that Rome would ever think of doing. This is the guarantee of Protestant permanence. The Protestant Reformation put the Bible in the hands of the people. Every time we find consolation, inspiration and blessing in its precious pages we are in debt to the Reformation."

Spiritual Revival in Spain

In view of the increasing interest in the Holy Scriptures and in Evangelical belief prevailing in Government Spain to-day, it would be interesting to know something of the life and character of our Spanish brethren, especially under present conditions.

As so many people have returned to this country from the larger towns, such as Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia, living conditions in these cities are fairly well known to most people in England. For this reason I will confine myself mostly to describing what I have observed of life and conditions in the smaller towns, villages and farms of the provinces.

The peasants of Murcia, Catalonia and Aragon have very similar characteristics. They are all individualistic, very conservative and independent. Except in Catalonia, where many peasants were Anarchists and there was less illiteracy, the majority of the people before this, the present rebellion, were exceptionally hard-working, frugal, ignorant, superstitious and, to outward appearance, devout Roman Catholics. They had very little land. Wages were pitifully low and life was not, in the main, a very cheerful existence. Had the present Government had the time to put its Agrarian Reform into operation these conditions would have been greatly improved. In many small agricultural villages the holders of small plots of land formed themselves into a syndicate to pool their resources in order to obtain enough to exist on.

At the outbreak of the present rebellion many of the great land-owners who had identified themselves with the Fascist movement against the Government fled to other countries, and the local syndicates immediately began to control these estates and place all available land under cultivation. This was, however, done under the supervision of the Government, and the result is that the Spanish peasant in Government Spain has enough land in normal times to support himself and family in decent style, and in time of war to be of valuable service in producing food for the general community. The Roman Catholic Church, which guided the peasants in almost every matter incident to their lives at the time of the outbreak of the rebellion, also ceased to function, and, for the first time in their lives, the Spanish people found that freedom of thought and religion was possible. This freedom did not go badly to the heads of the people and cause any undue foolish behaviour; the Spaniards' natural dignity and common-sense restrained them, but it gave them an inquiring mind regarding many of those matters that the priests had stated were dangerous for the layman to have knowledge of. These included such things as reading, the Bible, religious discussion amongst the laity, secular education, the right of the Church to dominate all their actions and many similar matters. The attitude of the people in the first days of the war towards the Church was extremely bitter, and it is understandable especially as every one in Spain had the fixed idea that the Church was behind and fostering the civil war. In addition to this, the peasants for centuries had had nothing but unhappiness at the hands of the Church, which had always supported the oppressor and reaction and, even though, as an example, in the small cathedral city like Vich, in Catalonia, there were thirty-six religious houses, each of which had a school attached, three-quarters of the population of the city and practically none of the inhabitants of the surrounding country could either read or write. These schools were not for the people, but for those children whose parents could pay quite high fees for a very meagre education. Although, at the time of the establishment of the Republic, education was declared to be lay, free and compulsory, the Roman Church hindered in every way the operation of this law and still retained the monopoly of educating the young. But it must be understood that this bitterness was not against religion or religious beliefs, but solely against the Roman Church. The Spanish peasant is fundamentally religious, and even to-day the greeting of "Go with God" and the call "Ave Maria" when visiting another house is used by most of the country folk. These are not the only religious expressions that are used. The most interesting proof of the religious tendencies of the Spaniard is the tremendous interest in Evangelical belief and the desire to possess a Testament.

In public it is quite common to see people reading the Bible; in trains, trams, buses, cafes and restaurants, or while waiting in a queue. This would not have been possible before, and the questions that are asked the readers of the Scriptures and the discussions that take place are bringing the light of salvation to many Spanish hearts.

At the Book Fair recently held in Barcelona a few months ago the Bible was the best seller. One of the greatest fields and the most fruitful for missionary endeavour at the present time is Government Spain. The earnest desire of so many that I have spoken to is to "know Jesus," but there are so few workers. In spite of starvation, anguish and constant danger which the Spanish people are bearing so nobly, the latent faith in them is now finding expression, and I know that we will have many Spanish brothers in the Lord quite soon. It might be interesting to many to know how generally the Spanish peasant lives, works and amuses himself at the present time. As very few peasants owned land they worked for a land-owner, but did not live on the land they worked. They lived in small villages, and that is the reason why in Spain so many villages are so near one another. From this village generally the whole family issue forth about day-break and proceed to the fields, sometimes quite a distance away. If they are not far from their village they return for the "siesta," which in Spain is very necessary in the hot summer mid-day. If they are far away they have their "siesta" or rest in some shady spot. The siesta is quite a long period, generally from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. After 4 p.m. work is resumed until nearly dark, when the peasants return and have the big meal of the day. Unlike farmers in other lands, who retire early, the Spaniard is very fond of sitting round the fire and discussing the topics of the day with his neighbours or family until the early hours of the morning. Spanish village houses are nearly all built on the same plan. The family occupy the upstairs portion and the donkey or mule the lower. The Spanish peasants' amusements are very simple. At the present time, owing to the necessity for more intensive cultivation of the land in order for greater production to feed the already almost starving population, although the number of "*Fiestas*" or feast days is limited, they are still fairly common, and cessation from labour, dancing and an attempt to provide some little change in diet for the children is made. It sounds very unexciting and a somewhat feeble method of enjoying oneself, but it must be remembered that Spain is at war, and the Spanish people are taking that war very seriously. Also, except for rationed food and the exact legal quantity, it is impossible to purchase food stuff anywhere in Republican Spain, no matter how much money you have. Bartering of one commodity for another is the method of exchange to-day between peasants, and although at present, mainly in Catalonia, there are quite a number of peasants owning sheep, poultry and rabbits, this supply will not last much longer. In the large towns the standard diet twice a day is a small plate of rice followed by one of lentils, a very small roll and nothing more. In the country the people manage to feed a little better, but it is necessary even there to strictly ration food. Soap is a very scarce commodity and much sought after. A peasant would give a rabbit or two kilos of turnips for a pound of soap quite cheerfully. This scarcity of soap also means that the menfolk cannot shave themselves, so they have to resort to the barbers in the village, who consequently do a roaring trade. It is quite a common sight to see a queue of men waiting patiently for their turn at the barber's hands. Since the revolt, stolid Spanish women and girls no longer wear hats, and one is not startled daily there, as here, by the amazing affairs one sees perched on women's heads, but nevertheless, even in Spain women's vanity must find an outlet—they visit the hairdressers instead of the hat shops and some rather wonderful styles of hairdressing are seen. It is a beneficial war for hairdressers if for no one else. The women of Spain have entered whole-heartedly into war work. Hospitals, munition factories, tramways, railways, all have their full quota of women, releasing men to fill the ranks at the front in the grim struggle of the Republic for its existence. It is amazing how cheerful they always are under present conditions, how willing to help, how sympathetic to those in pain or distress. My own experience of the Spanish girls in hospitals where I have lain wounded, also in the homes and factories I have visited, has filled me with the

greatest admiration and respect for them. And the men? Well, one need not enlarge on their courage, loyalty and capacity for suffering, the course of this war proves this. Without a third of the tanks, planes or artillery that the other side has and is constantly using against them they have resisted the forces of the invader with a heroism that has won for them the admiration of the world.

It is these people of sterling worth who to-day have shown definitely a deep and earnest desire to become true seekers after Jesus Christ. Anarchism, so prevalent in Catalonia before the war, has practically ceased to exist. Communism, while it has certainly increased numerically has not such a very great membership. The Evangelical Churches are steadily increasing their membership, and in these days, with the difficulty of travel from country to town, it will come as a surprise to many town dwellers, members of Churches, how many country members already exist. One Bible in a small village owned by one who can read and speak intelligently means the conversion of several. No wonder the priests fear the Bible.

It is our duty to do our utmost to support any movement that has as its aim the evangelization of the Spanish people and the provision of Bibles to them. While it is true that we must assist to provide food for this starving race we must also provide them with spiritual food. The Spanish Government has organized classes everywhere to teach the people to read and write. Even in the front line illiterate soldiers spend about an hour a day having proper instruction in reading, writing and arithmetic. Several men that I have seen up the line possessed copies of the New Testament. One of them was a member of the famous fighting shock-troop brigade, called "the Listers," led by that brave soldier, Eurique Lister, one of the defenders of Madrid. I have been present at an evangelistic service held a few miles from the front line upon a Sunday evening last July, just before the Ebro offensive. The conductor was a young Spanish lieutenant who fell in action about three weeks later at Corbera. This service was held in an olive grove near Marca in Catalonia, very near Falseb, to which Franco is said to be trying to reach in order to conquer Reus and subsequently Tarragona. The attendance was excellent and although no hymns were sung the address and general discussion was the order of service which lasted about three hours. Think of this, you Christians of England, who fidget if the service is a couple of minutes over one hour. I do not know the results of this attempt to win souls for Christ under such circumstances, as I had to return to my unit quite quickly afterwards, but Lieutenant Mirales told me that interest in the Gospel story was very strong from a good number of men of all ranks, not only in his battalion but in others. Ah, well, Mirales Garcia, your body is lying in a hillside near Gaudesa, a long way from your beloved Andalusia, but many of those to whom you showed the "Way of Salvation" still live and your work still goes on. The needs of Spain are great; their need of God is greatest of all possible needs. We must help in this work of bringing the knowledge of the love of God to the Spanish people. The first help we can give is prayer. That help in the Spanish field will be found, and existing workers be especially inspired with the Spirit of God so that the whole harvest may be gathered in. But while we pray we must not forget those in the lands occupied by Franco, where religious freedom is not allowed and persecution is rife.

God grant that Spain may speedily be won for Christ and the noble Spanish people know in their hearts at last "the peace that passeth all understanding."

[We are unable to give the name of the writer of the above arresting facts of life and work in Spain to-day. He has only recently returned from Spain to England, being forced to leave his work under the Government's withdrawal of foreigners. Will our readers note the writer's insistence upon the need of prayer for Spain, and all influences seeking to evangelize without war prejudice. The above article was written before the fall of Tarragona and other parts of Catalonia.—ED.]

The Universal Week of Prayer, 1939

Some Early Reports from Home and Foreign Centres

At this time of the year reports from home and foreign centres where the united and Universal Week of Prayer is observed flow steadily in to the Alliance House in London. They represent much self-sacrificing labour in organisation, and on the part of Chairmen and Speakers, co-operation which demonstrates the fact of unity, and which, in itself, is an assurance of power in Prayer and blessing to follow. We regret being unable to publish all reports which come to hand (there are still many who forget to send them) and it should be remembered that the large majority of these reports come to hand after "Evangelical Christendom" for January-February has gone to Press. The following reports will, we feel sure, be read with deep interest and thankfulness to God on the part of all readers. They represent widely separated centres, but there is an underlying unity of spirit and aim throughout indicative of what the World's Evangelical Alliance represents in all its witness and work.—Ed.

AYLSHAM, NORFOLK

We have had a most successful Week of Prayer, commencing at the Parish Church on Monday, and visiting every other Church each night in turn up to Saturday night, the Ministers of the various Churches taking the meetings. Such a spirit of unity prevailed as I have never before met in my experience (and I have travelled widely). The leaflets you supplied were a great aid to our meetings, the subjects being followed according to plan. One is confident that the outcome of these meetings will have lasting spiritual results.

WHITCHURCH, HANTS

Splendid meetings were held each evening at the various places of worship, the Vicar conducting one at the Parish Church. Good numbers gathered night by night, and a fine spirit of prayer was manifest. We are sure the Churches will benefit from these united meetings, and pray that, as a result, many may be born into the Kingdom the wide world over.

BOSCOMBE, HANTS

The meetings, taken as a whole, have been well attended. There has been a manifest spirit of prayer, with a keen realisation of the needs of the day. The United Witness Meeting was well supported, including the attendance of some of the local members of the Town Council.

TIVERTON, DEVON

Five meetings for prayer were arranged in different Churches. The attendances, ranging from forty to ninety, were very encouraging. Several attended more than once, and on each occasion every denomination was well represented. Throughout the Week there was a deep consciousness of the need of the world, and of the power of prayer to help meet that need. It is our sincere hope that these meetings will bear fruit in more regular and systematic prayer throughout the year.

WHITSTABLE, KENT

The meetings were very well attended, and the people, I believe, came to a greater realisation of the truth of the Body of Christ. We felt we were all linked up to the dynamic force which alone will set the world right.

DUNSTABLE, BEDS

I am glad to report that the Week of Prayer has been successfully observed after a lapse of many years. The tone and spirit of the meetings were good. Your letter to the Mayor of the Borough elicited very willing and thorough support from him, for which we were grateful both to him and to you.

KESWICK, CUMBERLAND

The Universal Week of Prayer was observed in Keswick, as usual for the last fifty years or so. All the Ministers of the town took part, including the "Open Brethren," and the meetings were held in the various denominational halls in turn. These meetings afford the only opportunity for common and united witness on the part of the various bodies of Christians in this town.

CHESHAM, BUCKS

The Week of Prayer was observed here last week. The attendances were splendid, and the prevailing spirit one of real uplift and blessing.

WOLVERHAMPTON, STAFFORDSHIRE

The weather was very severe all the week, with deep snow and bitter frost. This, no doubt, affected the attendances. We had, however, a fine spirit of prayer and fellowship among us, which was very encouraging and inspiring to those present. We felt that our observance of the Week was well worth while, and has been a blessing.

OULTON, SUFFOLK

We had a most helpful and encouraging time during the Week of Prayer. At all the meetings there were many from the various Churches who offered earnest prayers, and there was always the definite desire to keep to the subject suggested for the day.

NEWHAVEN, SUSSEX

We enjoyed the full series of meetings throughout the week, and these were especially well attended during the first part of the week. There was a distinct realisation of the present situation and a marked earnestness in the pleas of the friends. We can only continue to pray that the prayers of His people may be acceptable to God, and that His blessing of peace may be bestowed upon all nations.

GORLESTON-ON-SEA, NORFOLK

The friends from all the Churches gave their united support to the local arrangements for the observance of the Week of Prayer. The meetings were generally well attended and proved inspiring and helpful, all willing to work together for the common good, and to serve loyally our common Master and Lord. We would thank you for your untiring efforts year by year in passing on information and encouragement concerning particulars and arrangements for this special Week.

BUCAREST, ROUMANIA

Happily, our meetings were not interfered with. We had very happy meetings, though one could not help feeling the strain under which we are living. Very earnest prayers were put up that complete freedom of worship might be granted, and that those now suffering imprisonment and hardships might speedily be helped.

MONMOUTH, MON.

The meetings held this year have been very successful, both in spiritual tone and in attendance. For the first time we held the opening meeting in the Parish Church, the Archdeacon officiating. It has been very encouraging and inspiring, and we are looking for still better things to come.

SUNDERLAND, Co. DURHAM

The outstanding event during the Week of Prayer in this town was the Civic Service held in Bishopwearmouth Parish Church. This was conducted by the Rural Dean and the Mayor's Chaplain, and attended by the Mayor and Mayoress, the Town Clerk and members and officials of the Corporation, as well as by clergy, ministers and members of the various Churches. In spite of bad weather this service was largely attended. In the course of his address the Rural Dean (Rev. R. W. Stannard) said: "The purpose of the Week of Prayer was that, believing that God could and would guide human affairs if we sought His will in prayer, we should lay our human needs and problems before Him, giving thanks for past blessings, acknowledging past failures, and asking for clear guidance and direction for the present and future."

NOTTINGHAM, NOTTS.

Over one hundred representatives of almost every religious denomination in the city attended a prayer meeting held in connection with the World's Evangelical Alliance, during the Universal Week of Prayer, and convened by the Lord Mayor of Nottingham. The meeting was held in the Albert Hall, and presided over by the Lord Mayor, who, in the course of his address strongly stressed the need for prayer at the present time.

SWINDON, WILTSHIRE

In the local observance of the Universal Week of Prayer Swindon Churches have been greatly encouraged by the co-operation, for the first time, of the Salvation Army, the Bible Institute, and the Railway Mission. Meetings were held each evening at the Regent Street Methodist Church. The prayers were kept strictly to the large field offered by the scheduled subjects. The meetings have been very well attended throughout.

KIDDERMINSTER, WORCESTERSHIRE

In connection with the World's Evangelical Alliance, united prayer meetings were held in St. Mary's and Mill Street Churches. An excellent spirit permeated the gatherings, and the sense of unity was strengthened. The meetings were most helpful.

TROWBRIDGE, WILTSHIRE

We met at a different Church each night, and practically every Minister in the town, with the exception of the Roman Catholic, Unitarian and Strict Baptist, took some part in the meetings. Attendances were adversely affected by the very bad weather, but were often better than we anticipated, and on the Tuesday evening, when the weather was better, there were about 150 present. Prayers were hearty and to the point, and the addresses were helpful and stimulating. There was a note of urgency in many prayers, due to the international situation, and we all felt helped and comforted by the realisation of the presence of the Master in our midst.

ALTON, HANTS

The meetings were well attended considering the severe weather, and a real spirit of unity and Christian sympathy for all people was very noticeable in the many prayers that were offered. A pleasing feature was the number who took the opportunity of expressing publicly their keen desire for a spiritual revival throughout the world, thus co-operating in a world-wide time of prayer, which is bound to extend the Kingdom of Christ.

BEIRUT, SYRIA

The Armenian and Arab Evangelical Churches held daily services of prayer, the Anglo-American community had a single mid-week service devoting the entire time to prayer for the various topics suggested, without listening to any addresses. On Sunday, January 8th, at three in the afternoon the various communities gathered together in the Anglo-American Church for the joint celebration of Holy Communion. Five clergymen officiated, using five different languages, namely, Arabic, Armenian, Turkish, French and English. The German pastor did not share in the service this year. The church was packed to the last seat and some remained standing. The twenty-third Psalm and the Lord's Prayer was said by the large congregation, each in his own language. Together we sang, again each in his own language, hymns known to all. The officiating clergymen were Rev. Mufid Abdul Karin, Arabic language; Rev. Yenovk Geukgeuzian, Armenian; Rev. Yenovk Hadidian, Turkish; Pasteur Maurice Bres, French; and Rev. James Nicol, English. This service is coming to be a visible symbol of an increasingly strong spiritual bond uniting the Evangelical Christians of Beirut.

WORCESTER, WORCESTERSHIRE

"The prayer meetings which have been held each night this week in many churches, both Anglican and Nonconformist, have been more than an offering up of the heartfelt desires of men and women for peace. They have signified in a very real measure the closing-in of the ranks of Christendom in the face of the tremendous challenges of materialism in the present world. Never before in

the history of Worcester churches have Anglicans and Nonconformist preachers exchanged pulpits, and the congregations have been truly representative of Christian thought. The Bishop of Worcester, with his usual broadmindedness, was among the first to respond to the invitation of the joint committee formed to arrange the meetings. In occupying the pulpit of Angel Street, Congregational Church he plainly indicated his hope that Church unity in essentials and at times of crisis would become the rule and not the exception. And is this not continually a time of crisis for the Christian Church whatever its denomination? Beset by growing agnosticism on the one hand, and a denial of Christian principles on the other, menaced alike by indifference and antagonism, the Church must unite if it is to find its true strength." (Extract from *Worcester Daily Times*.)

GERMANY

The Universal Week of Prayer from January 1st to 8th was held at Marburg and, as last year, the Town Mission, the Baptists, the Methodists, and the Fellowship Congregation, as well as some members of the Blue Cross joined the prayer meetings. Some thirty to eighty members of the different Churches, and even more, attended the meetings, and their prayers rose up to the Throne of Grace for all those needs pointed out in the universal programme. At Korbach the meetings were held, Baptists, Free Evangelical Church and Fellowship Congregation joining together. The weather was very cold, with snow everywhere. The spirit was moving.

EALING, MIDDLESEX

Each evening from Monday to Saturday inclusive the meetings were held at various places of worship. A Free Church minister usually gave the address at an Anglican centre, and an Anglican clergyman at a Free Church centre. The gatherings were well attended. All the meetings were marked by a very united fellowship and an earnest spirit of prayer; with, often, representatives from four or five congregations, several of whom led in prayer on each occasion.

NORWICH, NORFOLK

The Week of Prayer held last week was a time of real spiritual refreshment. Those who were present felt that the state of the world's life added a deeper seriousness and urgency to the prayers. It is a good thing that Christian people of all denominations should meet together in this way to invoke God's blessing on our bewildered world.

DUNDRUM, ULSTER

The Week of Prayer, which has been kept regularly for several years, was again set apart this year to join with others all over the world in confession and supplication for the world's need, and to render thanksgivings for the witness of the Church in the world. Although the weather conditions were very much against us, the roads in many parts being altogether impassable, the attendances were good throughout the week. We were all refreshed and blessed as we sought to realise the unity of the family of God scattered throughout the wide world. We find the Week of Prayer a yearly means of blessing for the whole work of God in this district.

BAHRAIN, PERSIAN GULF

Last Saturday we brought to conclusion the Week of Prayer in Bahrain. The attendance was better than last year. For the six days we had an average attendance of forty-one men, women and children. The gatherings consisted of American missionaries, Christians from Iraq who are associated with the missionaries in the work, converts to Christianity from the Moslems in Bahrain, and Indians working in the Mission and in the oil camp. It was a cosmopolitan congregation to be sure. The two languages used were Arabic and English, in the hymns, talks and prayers. We have received so much benefit from the Week that we are continuing the prayers for another week, only conducted in a different way. It has all been very stimulating.

FLEET, HANTS

The meetings have been the means of bringing us more together as one, and while the average attendance was perhaps not quite as high as last year, three of the seven nights saw some splendid companies meet together for prayer. It was decided this year to hold the concluding meeting on the Sunday evening, and it was an immense success. The fine spirit of unity that exists here is shown by the fact that each service was conducted by a minister from another Church.

SHEMLAN, LEBANON

I thank you for the topics for the Week of Prayer, which here in our Home for Armenian Children we follow closely. Some neighbours came in and we had a time of blessing, as we always find the Week of Prayer to be. All through the year we have a prayer meeting each evening, but that Week always seems to be different somehow. Our Evangelist leads, and, apart from reading the portions of Scripture, giving out the topics as they come, and singing part of a hymn between each subject for praise and prayer, all the time is given for mentioning the special matters before God and praising Him for all He has done, yet it was not possible to close under an hour and a half each evening, and we ourselves were certainly helped in our spiritual lives.

NAPLES, ITALY

We have had, thanks to our Heavenly Father, a most helpful and blessed season in connection with the Universal Week of Prayer. Every evening in the first week of the year we have held a meeting, where members of our six Churches in Naples and Portici have united together in common faith and brotherly love, in thanksgiving and intercession. With deep reverence and child-like trust have we asked for, and felt, the presence and peace of Christ and His Spirit of light and love. In perfect communion with all God's children in the wide world we have realised and enjoyed the fellowship of saints, the holy unity of the Church of Christ. May the Name of the Lord be blessed!

The Reality of United Prayer

The Universal Week of Prayer

By Rev. EDWARD SHILLITO

THERE are, at first sight, more exciting subjects for a talk than the Universal Week of Prayer. Some listeners will declare that they have engagements for this week which promise to be of greater interest than to make their way to their Church or parish hall and there to *pray* with others, many of them strangers. They have tried it before and found it a little dull. (Why is it we always find *it* or *them* to be dull?)

It may help us if we call our imagination to our aid, and by its means realize afresh what it is we do when we pray together, and who are they who, seen and unseen, kneel with us. There is nothing more needful in our Church life than to use the imagination. By this it is not meant that we should weave a pretty tapestry and fancies to hide a poor thing. But that we should penetrate into the reality, release the glory that is hidden, see the things temporal, poor as they may be, in the eternal light. We can do for that meeting in the parish hall what St. Paul did for that other meeting of the Christians in Corinth, a little company, "nobodies" in the life of that city: he saw them surrounded by a great company, by "all who in every place call upon the name of the Lord." That is what we are called to do during this Week of Prayer: to see all in every place by our side. The means provided by the large and courageous plans of the World's Evangelical Alliance, can help us in this. That is why they are made.

This year, as for ninety-two years past, the Call to Prayer has been translated and read in many languages, by Arabs, Turks, Chinese, Indians, Africans of many tongues, as well as by the peoples of Europe; and never has the response been so great. What undertones can be heard as the names of these languages are recited, in all of which *the same themes for prayer are set forth!* A Babel in their speech! But no Babel in their spirit!

By faith we can see ourselves taking our place with others out of every land and tongue. We and they look upon the same face in which shines the light of the glory of God; we hear the same word; we are humbled together; we sing the same new song. There is one answer rising to the Lord of the world, in whom all the families of the earth are one. This we can make our own.

"Are one." That at least is a claim which should arrest our attention. There is much to remind us in these days of the things which divide man from man. They are building higher and sterner barriers between the tubes of mankind. "Man," as the poet said, "is parcelled out in men." We look eagerly for some reality in which we can still know ourselves to be one—a society above the barriers of nations, a kingdom unto which they shall come from north and south, east and west. It may be in outward show a little thing, that many are praying together out of all the nations of the earth. But to the eye of faith here is the pledge of a unity which has not been broken, and can never be broken. Men looked outward on the level of their earth-bound life and everywhere they saw barriers rising; but when they look above them, they see the One Eternal Reality which is theirs. Nothing can rob them of their part in that other country. A countryman once said: "The devil is a good hedger, but he is a bad thatcher."

There is in being a kingdom which can never be taken from us; a way which can never be closed.

It may help us to look more carefully at the faces of those who are with us in this act of prayer.

There will be worshippers with us out of every age of the Church. Church history for those who know the Church of these days in the east and the south is not a matter of documents concerned with old

(Talk broadcast in the National Programme on Sunday, January 1st, 4 to 4.20 p.m.)

forgotten things; it is not dead but living—it is not dead but living. The Church of all the ages lives over its past again. Yes; and it may be still the age of the martyrs. Some out of every civilization will be with us, some kneeling with us, in Pacific islands whose fathers were in the Stone Age. They will be entering their little white Churches to sing the new song which we sing. With us too will be Chinese in town and village within sound of the guns, dying daily. Last year in Wuchang they met immediately after an air-raid! With us some of the inheritors of the desire of India, who have found the end of their wanderings at the feet of Christ. With us no less are the many who in Europe live in suspense, their hearts trembling with fear of what may come upon them.

Go back once more to that local Church of yours. They will be singing hymns; reading the Scriptures; offering prayers. All a familiar routine. Yet if only we lifted up our eyes we might see ourselves side by side with these others, not it may be of our communion, not of our race, not even of our age, but seeing what we see, hearing what we hear, making the same offering that we make.

Here to the eye of faith is the promise of a new Christendom. Here is something new in the history of the world. Here, too, man is one, not in the passing events of this visible world, but in the eternal world, which has broken into this world. Here there is an upper room in which the Lord meets with His disciples. For the first time in that room there are faces from many new lands, and now in that company there are heard for the first time many new tongues. This too we may know when we meet together during this Week of Prayer.

But what is it that they do when they meet for prayer?

Prayer at the very heart of it is an answer to a Divine Word, and that word for the Christian Church must always be the Word incarnate, the Word of the Crucified and Risen Lord. That Word is always the Love of God in action; and to that Word the children of men make their answer. "Blessed be the Lord God, the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed His people." There can be no Church without prayer, no prayer without worship. Desperate as our needs are, we do not meet first of all to cry for something which we have not received. We meet to rejoice together in something which we already have and can never lose. Not simply to pray that He will come, but to give thanks that He *did* come and He is here now, and of His Kingdom there shall be no end. We shall sing the new song of those who kneel in wonder before the Lord of their lives, who has done great things for them.

"This hath he done, and shall we not adore Him?
This will he do, and can we still despair?"

There is this unity, struggling to expression, in the prayers which will rise this Week. It is not a unity which depends upon something yet to be, but upon something acknowledged and confessed and obeyed. Here is the secret of that unity which all the children of this world know dimly or clearly that they need.

Let us put this first, even at the risk of being misunderstood. In the Universal Week of Prayer there is urgent need that we should bring into the light of God *this* situation, this tragic hour in which we are living. How can we help praying the prayer which is in all our hearts? *Give to us peace in our time, O Lord.* But this is not our first call. If we ask what it is that brings us together, let us say, the citizens of London in the Mansion House at noon to-morrow, and the African tribesmen in Nigeria, and the Chinese statesmen, peasants, we do not find the answer in their common needs, but in their common possession; not in their cry to God, but in the one Divine Word which they have heard and believed. They are making together an answer to that Word of the Living God.

The outward show which is made may be poor and mean. If we went the round of the earth and dropped in upon these meetings, we might even smile at the difference between the reality as we see it and their exalted words about it. But what is the *reality*?

If it is true that these men and women are making their answer to a Divine Word, then whatever their outward show may be, they are now taken up unto the life of their Lord, they are one with Him in His body; they now belong to His endless and indissoluble life. They are making the answer for all mankind, they are the first-born of a new humanity.

In such a calling they are met to bring

their intercessions. They come to join, in Principal Micklem's words, "in an intercession which never ceases from the Church on earth and the Church in heaven in union with Christ." The hidden glory of that meeting in the parish hall is here disclosed. Can it really be dull when they are praying with Christ, and in Christ?

They are bringing into the light this present-day crisis. Now is their accepted day, their only day: and they are bewildered, fearful, wandering as men who are in a strange city. But why *together*? Why a Week of United Prayer? What can there be in common in the intercessions of the citizens of London and the Indian peasant? Between the Chinese and the Japanese Christians? The fact that they are praying at the same hour is not of any importance; we are not called to pray in vast numbers so that we may arrest the attention of the Eternal Lord as though with a concerted shout. We need not call Him louder.

There are dangers against which we must guard. Prayer in the name of Christ can never be an instrument of policy, either for an individual man or for a Church, or for a nation. Nations cannot mobilise their intercessors as they can their soldiers. Churches cannot out-pray each other. If Christian prayer is in reality the prayer of the Body of Christ then there must be a possible unity in intercession and this entire human scene as one whole can be spread out as one historic moment before the Lord God and one prayer may rise from the lips of all men.

There is a unity of faith, and a unity of need. Yes: a unity of need.

It was never more clear than it is to-day that all mankind is set within one action. The nations from east to west have been called to play their separate parts out in one drama, and there are no spectators. Those who pray together during this Week have not only the same Word to answer, they have the same historic scene to bring into the light of that Word. Men in every land are compelled to make their choice between the same alternatives in the realms both of knowledge and of action. When one has chosen, that choice is felt in the life of all the others. When one suffers, the others also suffer; as St. Augustine said: "If a thorn be in the foot, the whole body must stoop to pull it out." Strange as it seems the very hour in which this unity in their destiny is made clear, is the hour in which men are blindly struggling to live unto themselves. In such an hour those who pray will offer the one way which they can offer to the Lord in whom all the families of the earth are one. A way through them will be laid open to the Eternal and unchanging will towards all mankind. What will follow: it is not for any man to know. That is in the hands of God. But when we pray together that His Kingdom may come, we offer to Him a way whereby He can act through us in the tangled and bewildered scene in which our lot is cast. His love is round us "like a breaking sea"; it is the glory of those who pray together this Week to open up ways in every land whereby that love may be made known, and that Will may be done.

That we should offer such a way; that we should kneel with others from many communions, and many races, that we should unite in the new song with those who have come from many peoples with much that has been learned and much suffered; with much to remember and much to forget; that we should confess that there are allies beyond time, and powers of the age to come—this is our calling.

Perhaps after all it may be an adventure to take part in the prayers of the people of God.

What if that parish hall transfigured for you is taken up into the large Upper Room where the Lord of the World meets with His disciples?

"The Holy Spirit dwells not in coteries of self-willed, opinionative men, but in the great commonwealth of saints, and especially in the hearts of those who love the whole body more than any part, not excepting that to which they themselves belong."

Wherein consists a Christian Home?*

By GEORGE GOODMAN

You will all agree with me when I say that the most beautiful thing in this world is the Christian home. Without doubt it has been the making of our country. It has produced the noblest form of manhood, I suppose, that the world has ever seen. Therefore we need to pray earnestly that spiritual home life may be maintained in our land. We owe a great deal to the Puritans, who are very much abused nowadays, for having set the example in our country of true, godly home life, where the Word of God is read and where prayer was the regular thing.

The ideal of our Christian faith is the Christian home. I do not hesitate to say this. Whatever one may have to say for monks and friars and nuns and persons of that sort, I am quite sure you will agree with me when I say that there is nothing more beautiful in this world than the Christian home, where the father is a godly man and guides the household according to the Word of God; where the mother gathers the children round her knee and tells them the Bible stories and first teaches their infant lips to pray.

I came from such a home—a father and mother and fourteen children, seven boys and seven girls; so we were a large and very happy household. My father had a beautiful voice, and he used to read the Scriptures to us every morning and every evening. I have never forgotten those impressive times. Some chapters of the Bible I never read without hearing again that quiet and melodious voice reading the Word of God, and then, of course, leading us in prayer.

The godly home is the most beautiful thing that has ever been seen or ever will be seen on earth. We have one or two glimpses of it in Scripture. You remember in Psalm cxii we have a beautiful description of home life, a delightful little peep at the home upon which God's blessing rests. Then we have another little peep in the Second Epistle of John, where the Apostle writes, "unto the elect lady and her children," and sends greetings from "the children of thy elect sister"—probably his own household; and says, "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father"; and then beseeches them to walk together in love and to guard the house from the visit of heretical and evil teachers. So again I say that the most beautiful thing in this world is the Christian home.

Now, I am going to ask a very simple question and try to answer it: *Wherein consists a Christian home?* What are the features of such a home?

i. I need hardly say that the first and most important is that that home is one *where the Word of God is taken as the rule of life*, where it is read daily and the children are taught to regard it as the very message and Word of the living God to them, and are exhorted to receive that Word with meekness and to seek to walk in the obedience of faith to the Scriptures.

You remember that the Lord told the parable of the two men who built their houses respectively on the rock and on the sand. He told us that those *who heard His word and did it* built their house upon the rock. I think we may apply that to our households. Do we want our households to be built upon a firm foundation, so that when times of stress and storm beat upon the household it will stand, being founded on a rock? Then I take it the Lord reminds us that if that is to be so we must be hearers and are exhorted to be doers of the Word of God. I think that is the first essential to the Christian home, that it is established on the Word of God.

ii. The second is, of course, *that it is sanctified by prayer*. It is a good thing when the head of the house is able to lead his family in simple, earnest prayer. There is a difficulty here, I know, because some men who are naturally reserved and shy will tell you plainly that they have not what is sometimes rather carelessly called the gift of prayer. At any rate, they do not feel

* Address delivered at the Bible House, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C.4, in connection with the Universal Week of Prayer, on Friday, January 6th, 1939.

they have the ability to lead their households in worship. I suggest that need not be any hindrance. I do not think we should regard family prayer as a too formal thing. I travel about a great deal and see many Christian homes. I usually find that there is family prayer: it has not died out, I am glad to say, in the circles in which I move. But where the children have to hurry off to school, before rising from the table, the father takes the Bible—sometimes it is mother who takes it—and reads, and together they bow their heads in simple, beautiful, natural prayer. God is thus honoured and He responds always to them that honour Him.

I remember a lady telling me she felt she ought to conduct prayer in her household, but she said to me, "All the night before my heart was beating like a sledge hammer!" And this because she had to read the Word of God and offer a simple prayer. I can sympathise with people who are troubled in that way; but may I suggest a simple remedy. If you find you cannot do this service, get the children to read the chapter or the portion. They will be pleased to do it. You may perhaps offer a reward for those who do it well, telling them to read it beforehand that they may do it the better. Then I suggest you kneel down and say the Lord's Prayer together. It is sufficient. It is a beautiful prayer, one expressing the will of God for His people. That might be done without too much heart-beating, I think, even in cases where people find some reticence in establishing the family altar. Only I think we must remember that the home should be sanctified by prayer, and that "Them that honour Me," says God, "I will honour." His blessing will be upon that household.

iii. May I say a third thing, and that is *that the house must be guarded by godly rules*. In Deuteronomy xxii, v. 8, there is a very interesting passage about building a house. "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house, if any man fall from thence." To spiritualise that is very simple. If you are establishing a home you are building a house. Let it be seen that there is a battlement upon the house, for there are enemies of a Christian home and there are those who would injure it.. Things are getting into our homes in strange ways now. The wireless and the newspaper and things of that sort are bringing into our homes things that need to be watched.

May I suggest that there should be godly rules in the home. Even the wireless should be controlled by the master of the house. There are some times when emphatically I should turn it off straight away. I think that those who have the guidance of young children in the home should see that evil things do not creep through in that way. At any rate, there should be godly control in the home. Here we are met with a difficulty. *A perfect mixture of grace and truth* in the home is what is wanted: a gracious home, but one regulated by righteousness, where there are wise laws, but there is also sensible liberty. Those who have the government of homes will know how difficult it is to keep that balance. Nevertheless, He of whom it was said that when He walked upon the earth He was full of grace and truth will help us to follow His example. Let the control be so gracious that there is no harshness, no bitterness, and yet there is strict discipline. I will bear witness that we never thought our parents were hard when they were strict, and we knew perfectly well that when they said a thing they intended what they said.

My mother told me that when I was a little fellow she heard me talking to my younger brother. We had asked for something that she had refused. My brother said, "Go and ask her again," and my mother said she heard me say, "What's the good? You know when she says a thing she means it." And my mother—a very sacred memory—did mean what she said. I suggest that this mixture of grace and righteousness is what we need in the Christian home.

iv. Then may I say in the fourth place that *the Christian home should be in some measure a testimony to outsiders*. I went into a home the other day and saw a very familiar thing. You have seen it, an intaglio card bearing the words, "Christ is the Head of this house, the unseen Guest at every meal, the silent Listener to every conversation." When a person comes into a house and sees that, he knows what to expect. Surely it gives an atmosphere in the home that will be honouring to God?

We have in our home a Scripture, "Ye know not when the Master of the house cometh." A new maid came, who said, "That's a cute text!" I fancy she thought it referred to myself! I have often seen, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." You need not put a text outside as some do, but in any case let your home have a testimony. Let the whole neighbourhood know that you are Christian people; that every one who comes into the home must recognize that the Lord is indeed the Master of the house.

v. Lastly, I think there should be some *care to guide and direct the conversation* at the table. I believe godly conversation is a great thing. I know there are some homes where to speak of Christ would bring about an awkward silence. That is a pity. There should be a steady endeavour to break down that want of liberty, of freedom, and naturalness in speaking about Christ and the things of God. I am sure that there should be in every godly home an effort to guide and direct the conversation. The children should be encouraged to speak. Do not say, "Children should be seen and not heard." That is not according to Scripture, which says that if your children ask questions you are to answer them. The Lord Himself set a splendid example. He did not teach the doctors. It is not a boy's business to instruct Doctors of Divinity. He asked them questions and He answered their questions, and went down to Nazareth and was subject to His parents.

I suggest that the children should be encouraged to speak freely of spiritual things; and they should be answered very carefully and thoughtfully. If you are perfectly honest you will sometimes have to say, "I do not know." Have the wisdom to do that, and they will then not think that you are shuffling. But I do think that in the home there should be some guidance of the conversation. I have made it a practice—I have not always fulfilled it as well as I should like, but I have made a practice where children are at the table, always to try to direct the conversation into something that will help them. When I tell the story of some rather striking conversation, I notice the children prick up their ears, and I see them intently listening to the end of the story. Sometimes God has blessed it to them.

On one occasion I was at a table with a number of young people, and the conversation came round to the question, What was the faith that saved? I tried in a simple way to show that the faith that saved was that which said, "I believe God," that believed His testimony concerning Christ, and yielded obedience to that blessed Lord. And so it went on. One of the young people rose from the table and went out. Of course I did not know why, but the elder sister met me next day and said, "You will be interested to know that when I went up to my sister's room I found her weeping, earnestly desiring to be saved; and I had the joy of leading her to Christ." So it is good that sometimes we should endeavour to direct the conversation in the home that it may be such as becomes a godly household.

Never allow a servant of God to be criticised. Never mind how poorly he has spoken, how feebly you think he has presented the truth. Always insist that the young people shall honour a minister of God, not merely because he has pleased them, but because he is the ambassador of the blessed God.

May the Lord bless our homes, and may there be the sweet savour of Christ in those homes. Amen.

The Council of the World's Evangelical Alliance cordially invite all who receive this issue of "Evangelical Christendom" who are not already Members or Subscribers to become such, and thus to assist its development and important National and International interests. All desiring thus to co-operate—Ladies as well as Gentlemen— are asked to forward their names to the General Secretary at Headquarters, 19, Russell Square, London, W.C.

Continental Evangelical Life and Work

(We ask our representatives and friends of Evangelical work in countries of Europe to send us from time to time substantiated facts of progress, or of persecution, where such is at the hands of the State, or the Roman Catholic Church, or other ecclesiastical influences. Newspaper reports will be welcomed.)

Jewish Persecution in Germany

"The hardships and obloquy inflicted upon the Jews of Greater Germany, regardless of age and sex, the humiliations to which they are continually subjected, the sufferings heaped upon religious and other leaders of the community, the perverted cruelty with which men, women and children are forced to perform the most degrading tasks, the desecration of synagogues and sacred objects of ritual, the wholesale spoliation, and the expulsion of families from districts where they have been settled for centuries, reducing them to the position of outcasts and to such despairing misery that suicide appears to them the only escape from such indescribable cruelty, constitute a crime against humanity." These were the words of Mr. Neville Laski, K.C., President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, speaking at a special meeting of the Board in the Royal Albert Hall. They were followed by an appeal to all striving for peace and appeasement in the world to declare their reprobation of this persecution, and not to rest until the status of complete equality with their fellow-citizens, to which they are entitled by every law of God and man, has been restored to the Jewish people, and to their fellow-sufferers in the lands of persecution. No instructed Christian can feel otherwise, and if prayer is availing, as we believe it to be, then it can and should be employed unceasingly on behalf of Israel thus scattered and peeled.

An Eye-Witness Speaks

What follows is the report of a responsible writer who has lived for long periods in Germany, and spent two months in that country just before the recent crisis. He writes:—

"In Germany all non-Aryans suffer, these including all Jews and all persons with at least one Jewish grand-parent, irrespective of whether they are Jewish or Christian in faith; also all Aryans married to non-Aryans and who refuse to divorce their non-Aryan mates. These number still fully 1,000,000 while there are 350,000 Jews and some 750,000 non-Aryans, apart from those in the Ostmark (Austria), which has about 190,000 Jews and perhaps 400,000 non-Aryans. Their lot is one of increasing woe, although little of it may be seen by the average tourist, who rarely comes in contact with anything beyond the shouting of the Hitler Germany. Slowly and surely every means of a livelihood is being taken from these people, more rapidly perhaps in Austria than in Germany itself. Already they have been expelled from all civil service posts, which included tram-conductors, postmen, the many varieties of municipal employees, etc. They have been eliminated from the legal and medical professions, and now from the solicitors' field and all cultural activities, such as public instruction, the opera, the theatre, and the fine arts, they must go. So it is also in the field of commerce.

"In Berlin, Jewish and non-Aryan owned shops must indicate the fact by placing the names of the owners in large white letters on the window. In Vienna most of such shops are placarded with the notices that they are under process of Aryanisation by decree of the Government. The process involves squeezing out the Jewish owner and all his Jewish and non-Aryan employees. The original owner is forced to sell at a price fixed by the Government, which is usually so low that it represents virtual confiscation. Actually, Jews and non-Aryans have no legal rights and are thus being ruthlessly deprived of all means of a livelihood.

"Further, mass eviction of Jews and non-Aryans from their dwellings is taking place. Once evicted, it is difficult to find another place of abode. In Vienna this means herding into a ghetto. Older folk, who have lived for many years in their own home and who, in their despair and suffering, complain of the hardship inflicted by eviction and implore a stay of execution, have been known to be told bluntly that they have two ways out of their difficulty—the Danube or the gas-cock."

Documentary evidence of the experience of one Jewish family in Germany has been available and shows that having decided to

emigrate, before the recent anti-Semitic wave started (a well-to-do family with associations in a middle-sized German town for the past three centuries), this family (father, mother, and two young daughters) sold their business and holdings, which realised £17,430. When they finally left Germany they were only allowed to take out with them £430 to start a new life in Canada. And, we are told, this family was lucky, because it sailed two days before the recent attacks on the Jews and their property.

The cry for help from the Christian Churches can be understood as such facts are narrated. Perhaps of the refugees the fate of the Jewish Christians is most tragic of all, for their brethren repudiate them, and the Christian Churches have yet to do more on their behalf.

Karl Barth on the German Church Struggle There is much to be known and understood concerning the German Church struggle, and we again commend a pamphlet on the subject by Professor Karl Barth, which can be obtained from our publication department (19, Russell Square, W.C.1) for the price of threepence post free. Those who wish to understand the struggle in the German Church should read Karl Barth's interpretation. He knows the material conditions but also recognises the spiritual meaning. He writes:—

"Through this tribulation the Church of Germany has been enabled to make a discovery: the discovery of the glory of the foundation on which the Church stands, of *the glory of the Word of God*, as the bread on which she may feed herself, as the fountain from which she may drink, as the power that is strong when men in the Church are weak. Those questions were not the end. There came—whence came they?—the great and ancient, the eternal answers: 'I am the Lord thy God, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage: thou shalt have no other gods but Me.' And: 'Whoever shall confess Me before men, him will I also confess before My Father which is in heaven.' And: 'Blessed are they that are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' There came to many, very many, a new hearing of this message, a new understanding of these words, a new joy in them, and a new trust in them. There awoke the understanding for what the National Socialist, in anger but quite correctly, called 'the totalitarian claim of the Bible,' of the claim of the Word of God which must possess us completely or not at all. There awoke the understanding for that which the Reformers in the sixteenth century had uttered with tongues of fire: Grace *alone!* Holy Writ *alone!* Honour to God *alone* in the highest! The more the heretics and the heathen raged from without shouting, 'Not God alone, but man too!' and finally, still more clearly: 'Man, man alone!' the more powerfully, though in all stillness, that other voice spoke in the ears of thousands: 'Glory to God alone in the highest!'"

Dr. Niemöller's Courage The forty-seventh birthday of Dr. Niemöller, who is still in a concentration camp (and reported to be broken in health and spirit) owing to his opposition to the Reich Government's Church policy, was the occasion recently ~~of a service~~ of intercession lasting two hours in his church at Dahlem. Several pastors of the Confessional Church officiated.

The preacher, in the course of his sermon, said:—If the congregation could this evening gather about the cell of their imprisoned pastor, what wishes they would bring to him—that the day might soon come when he could speak unrestrainedly to them again! And what wishes would he have for the congregation—what wishes for the other imprisoned brethren, such as Pastor Schneider in Buchenwald, Liepmann in Dachau, Thyssies in Dortmund, and all the others who are hindered in the performance of their duties! Pastor Niemöller would say to the congregation, in the words of St. John: "And now, my little children, abide in Him; that if He shall be manifested, we may have boldness, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming."

It is not a question here of celebrating a hero or a saint. If Pastor Niemöller formerly had much human courage, this courage is now broken in solitude; it is broken now that the justice pronounced by a German court is justice no more. He now sees the days, the months, the years run by uselessly, must lay his hands in his lap and can spell through this saying of St. John again and again. That must also be said to the congregation. It is not a question of whether the Church is brought to shame here, but whether it is brought to shame "there." What is a Church worth that is muzzled by

decrees? What is a Church worth that is only the harlot of authority? It is worth nothing!

But we should not be ungrateful. The Church rejects advantages that it may gain through betrayal. It resists attempts at compulsion. . . . Pastor Niemöller knows well that the congregation gather in this hour to remember him in his retirement and loneliness. All the prayers of the congregation unite in the wish that God may give it the joyousness to stand fast by the Faith and not falter in this disrupted time, in which world and congregation stand in deep perplexity before one another.

Prayer was offered for the imprisoned pastors and all those who are at present prevented by the State authorities from performing their pastoral duties.

A Call for Loyalty Latest news from Germany mentions that an important statement on the "distress" of the Evangelical (opposition) Church in Germany was recently read by Pastor Wilhelm Niemöller, brother of the imprisoned pastor, at the latter's parish church of Dahlem, Berlin.

The statement says this distress has been caused by the steps taken against a number of pastors. Because the Church summoned its parishioners to penitence and consecration in September when war threatened, the statement adds, its leaders were accused of high treason. "But a people must perish if those who are called to proclaim the Word of God are forbidden to tell the truth."

In spite of doctrinal disputes it was necessary that the Churches should unite "in view of the distress in which the Evangelical Church is living at present."

The State was about to reach its goal, which it had set itself since 1933. It had created a sham Synod which tried to reach this goal by the exercise of force. All the proposals made by the Church had been disregarded, but the Church had received its commission from God and Christ and therefore could not support such developments.

About a hundred and thirty pastors of the Evangelical Church have now been deprived of their office, forty may not preach, four are still in "protective custody," among them Pastor Martin Niemöller, and eight are under arrest awaiting trial, the statement also says.

Anti-Jewish Feeling in Poland On his return from Poland, Mr. Gooch reported that the Jewish question is very much to the fore in Warsaw to-day. Passers-by on the main thoroughfares were being handed leaflets pointing out that Jews are the enemies of Poland, that their fate in Poland is sealed, and that as with Germany, Poland must be cleared of the Jews. These leaflets were signed "Committee of Radical Nationalists," and were being distributed by groups of young people openly, without let or hindrance. The Warsaw University was closed in consequence of these anti-jewish excesses, and was to remain closed until after Christmas. Commenting upon this, *The Times* Warsaw correspondent remarked:—

"Though the problem of what to do with the Jews of Poland, where they are approximately one in ten of the population, is an old one, it has been forced into fresh prominence by the talks in London about the possibilities of Jewish emigration. The opinion is frequently heard that no relief can be expected from the countries which treat their Jews well. This dangerous argument would gather strength less rapidly here, it is thought, if London showed some sympathetic understanding for Poland's Jewish emigration claims.

"In the Seym yesterday General Skwarczynski, leader of the Ozon (National Unity Camp), the majority on which the Government depend, called for a larger, bolder policy by the States in possession of sparsely populated territories. Although he declared that for economic and cultural reasons Poland must get rid of her surplus Jews by helping them somehow to emigrate, he abjured anything in the nature of "anarchical treatment" of the Jews, as this would be "alien to the Polish knightly spirit."

"The Jews expelled last month from Germany to Poland are still mostly in a sorry plight. There were about 15,000, of whom some 2,000 were under 17. About 6,000 are still stranded in a small area around Zbonszyn, on the frontier. What is to be done with them eventually nobody knows, and the authorities will not allow them to penetrate haphazard into Poland."

Mission Work in Ukraine The mission work among Ukrainians, in spite of tribulations, difficulties and want, is going forward. While ten years ago there were here and there a few individuals in the

whole Ukrainian territory in Poland, but now there is no village where there would not be at least a group of people who are connected with the Evangelical world. In this nucleus of a great Protestant Reformation which is yet to come among the Ukrainians, there are working fifteen missionary workers, ministering to over 35 congregations and evangelical preaching stations with about 5,000 believers. A very promising mission work is going on in Volhynia. People there really suffer a spiritual hunger. As in many places they cannot get the permission to hold the services and a missionary to preach to them, they usually walk from 15 to 40 kilometres to take part in the worship where in some cities in the German or Czech Evangelical Churches they got the permission to hold the services. In the village of Troscianetz, near Stepan, about 200 believers were waiting for three years to get the permission from the civil authorities to use certain halls for service, and appealed to the Mission Council in Kolomya for a missionary to preach the Gospel to them. But when the permission was given to them and the missionary came, he was arrested after a year of his service there for going at Christmas time from house to house with young Church members to sing Christmas carols, as the custom is here. For this he was sentenced to a month of jail, because he did not have legal permission to sing Christmas hymns and take gifts for the Church. Of course he did not know that for such a thing one has to have permission. And on the ground of being arrested, he was also banished from the boundary zone, where we have our congregation in Troscianetz. Now after the banishment from Volhynia, he is fined again for teaching in the Sunday School, and as some of the children did not know how to read, he taught them, for which he is again fined a month of jail or 300 zl. There are many similar cases where missionaries have to go through that kind of initiation.

Baptists in Roumania In five successive issues of the *Church Times*, the Roumanian Baptist question has been discussed. The Bishop of Gibraltar and others have stated their views, and the Editor inserted two letters from Dr. Rushbrooke in reply. Then the *Church Times* decided that it could not print any more letters on this subject. It happens, however, that the Bishop of Gibraltar, in his last letter, categorically denied the assertion that the driving force behind Decision No. 26,208 is ecclesiastical. This matter is so important that Dr. Rushbrooke has sent us the follow- comment on the subject:—

"Admittedly an Archbishop signs 'Decision No. 26,208,' but that is only one of many reasons for my statement. Permit me merely to cite a recent authoritative and impartial testimony. I have before me a report quoting Despatch No. 527 of September 17th, 1938, from the American Legation, Bukarest, addressed to the Department of State in Washington. It tells of efforts of Baptists in Roumania for nearly twenty years 'to have their Church recognised as a cult rather than as a religious association.' Recognised cults, it is explained, 'have a legal standing guaranteed under the Constitution giving them religious freedom, whereas religious associations are placed directly under the Minister of Cults and can only function with his special authorisation, which has been subject to frequent and sometimes disastrous change.'

"The document records that 'in spite of promises often made' (by Government leaders) 'the status of the Church remains the same.' Unofficial talks have failed to elicit an explanation of this attitude. 'It appears, therefore, that this policy must be dictated by the Orthodox Church, which is the State Church of Roumania and extremely jealous of its prerogatives as such.' Informal discussions with Roumanian officials are mentioned, 'but in spite of apparent agreement with our viewpoint or even of direct promises, nothing has been accomplished. The conclusion is that lay officials, no matter what their opinions, do not care to press the matter against the power of the Orthodox Church for political reasons.'

"Such a responsible statement does not tend to confirm the Bishop's denial."

Reunion in Roumania This may seem contradictory, but it should be understood that within the Orthodox Church in Roumania there are many who deplore the attitude of the Church towards freedom of conscience and worship. From time to time priests and people are persecuted for their tolerant and Christian feelings for the views of those known as Evangelicals, and who wish to make known to all alike the Gospel of Salvation in and through Christ Jesus. One such priest has recently written

a booklet entitled "For the Unity of All." This is probably a unique publication in Roumanian. The outstanding thought is the wrongness of the present disunity of the Church of Christ, but he does not put the whole, or even the chief blame on the Protestant Churches. He compares the Protestants with Paul, while he compares the Roman Catholics with Peter, and the Orthodox with John. He believes that unity is coming, but that the Church will first have to pass through the furnace of persecution. At the same time he calls all that love the Lord to seek unity now. One may not agree with all his theology, but one cannot but welcome his recognition of the true Christianity of all believers. He calls all believers to united work for the Lord, leaving all theoretical theology aside, for he puts the chief blame of disunion on the abstract reasoning of theologians. One could wish that his book would have success, but it is very doubtful that it will have much. It ought to be added that the booklet is written in definitely popular language, and the author hopes to write others on the same theme.

A Voice from Madrid Our readers perhaps wonder just what is taking place in religious life and worship in Madrid, so long besieged, and a battle front of roaring guns and the explosion of bombs. Our trusted and well-beloved President of the Spanish Evangelical Alliance, Rev. Fernando Cabrera, lifts the curtain in a recent letter, from which we quote. He says:—

"EBENEZER: Hitherto the Lord has helped us. Praise be to the Lord for His goodness. Since the 19th of July, 1936, when the war began until to-day, we have held our services without interruption. Not a single Sunday has been missed. And not only on Sundays, but we have held special services at Christmas, New Year, Lent, Easter, and the customary Lenten Lectures. All that at such a short distance from the battle front. Is it not wonderful!

"But what is more remarkable is that neither the Government nor the people have in the least interfered with us. The Government has shown quite clearly the respect it pays to the religious liberty granted by the constitution to all Spaniards. The people, even the extremists, have discriminated between a religion, the object of which is to render God worship, and a religion which is only a cloak for political ends.

"Our services are held in the most perfect order, reverence and normality. The Church's doors are open, the Prayer Book is used, hymns and other music are sung by the congregation, the organ is played and the minister wears his robes. . . . Everything as in times when we enjoyed peace. Well considered, what is our service but a peaceful resort amidst the turmoil of war.

"The only noticeable change is in the attendance. Before the war the Sunday service congregation was about ninety. Now it is about one-third. This can be easily explained. All young men, including my two sons, had to join the army, and young women employed in civil service were sent to Valencia and then to Catalonia when the Government was removed there, while others employed in war services are not free to attend them. Other families, the truth must be admitted, panic stricken, turned out their Bibles, lost their trust in God, and fled from Madrid when the danger approached the city. But there are the rest of the Lord's people who remain here, worshipping Him in His temple.

"Some people come to our services out of curiosity, of whom some have continued to come regularly, and we are full of hope that some day they will declare themselves for the Lord. It is not infrequent to see some soldiers at our services. They are believers who are only too glad to join with other brethren in worship. This is, by the way, another proof that religious liberty is fully respected in the republican army, and when off duty no restrictions are put in the way of soldiers who wish to fulfil their religious duties. Who will not feel inclined to thank God for His mercies towards us at the sight of these facts?"

Evangelical Progress in Portugal A correspondent sends us some interesting notes of Evangelical work in Portugal, from which we extract the following:—

"The petition for Alves Reis' reprieve was duly passed by H.E. the President to the Minister of Justice, and by him to the group of judges who have to consider such petitions. It is rumoured that there is a favourable atmosphere in high official quarters, but we now have to await the judges' decision. Please continue to pray.

"A young man from Foz do Douro is doing a remarkable work round Quintela, the

village where José Freire went by invitation to start evangelistic work a little more than a year ago, meeting with severe opposition. This young fellow, Campos, a blacksmith by trade, seems to be imbued with a thorough missionary spirit. When Freire visited the out-of-the-way village of Tourem in the wild, mountainous country on the northern frontier, he found Campos there rendering valuable service, and when the Quintela work was started, there he was to lend a hand. At Quintela, services have continued to be held once a month by visitors, the most frequent of these being Aparicio, from Oliveira de Azemeis; but Campos felt led to throw up his job in a factory, where he had quite good prospects, and to go there to devote himself wholly to making the Gospel known. It was feared he was perhaps hardly sufficiently advanced in Christian experience thus to launch out, but it would seem the call was of God, as he has won the hearts of the people and is being kept busy over an extending area, holding meetings in some half-dozen villages, attended by never less than about fifty people and, in at least one place, by as many as four hundred. Now he has been invited to commence services in the neighbouring town, Oliveira do Frade, where is offered the use of a hall or large room. Campos is urging Sr. Freire to pay him a visit, and the latter hopes this may be possible early next month. We do not know how the young fellow is living, as he has no means of his own and, so far as we know, he has received very little financial help, so it is presumed the villagers are themselves housing and feeding him. At one place they are already talking of building a hall, or, as such are usually described in Portugal, a 'Casa de Oração' (House of Prayer).

"A German Lutheran, who was visiting Portugal on business when the anti-Jewish outbreak started, is now unable to return home because one of his grandparents was Jewish, while his permit for Portugal expires this week, so the poor man is in a desperate plight. Sr. Moreira, in the name of the Evangelical Alliance, is appealing for permission to be granted him to settle in Portugal, as he has the means to start in business."

Religion in Esthonia The proposal to include the Orthodox Churches of Esthonia and Latvia in the Church unity programme of Anglo-Catholic representatives of the Church of England, and to invite them to the Lambeth Conference of 1940, is one which is likely to be received with mixed feelings, especially among Evangelicals. Little is known in this country of the religious life of these Baltic States, once a part of Russia, and still because of their nearness to Soviet Russia being strongly influenced thereby. Writing on the subject in the organ of the Student Christian Movement, the Esthonian Secretary of the S.C.M. says:—

"Over 92,000 Russians live within the boundaries of the 'free Esthonian democratic State.' Over two-thirds of the entire Russian population of Esthonia (65,428) are peasants. The majority of the Russian population live in the Petseri region (30,821) and on the shores of the river Narova and of the lakes Peipus and Pskov (12,628). In the cities there live about 27,000 Russians.

"Regardless of the war and revolution that had taken place, Russian life in that part of Europe bears many traits of the old pre-revolutionary mode of life. This is especially true with regard to family life. 'New tentencies,' and even 'very modern tendencies' do penetrate into daily life, yet profound conservatism of habits carries on along with the wireless, with the desire to 'catch up with modern times.' . . .

"Religious, and especially church social life, is far from perfection. The leading rôle in the parishes is played by those who are the richest, though not the best spiritually. The priests' efforts are checked by the fact that they depend for their living upon the parish people, or rather on the leaders of parish life.

"Parishes often count two to five thousand persons. Villages belonging to the same parish are sometimes scores of kilometers one from the other. Yet the parish cannot afford to pay for an assistant priest. In many cases even the one priest lives on a semi-starvation standard, especially if he has a large family. Other members of the church staff—deacons and readers—cannot help the priest very much, for they have to earn their livelihood elsewhere, and in most cases are available for church work only on Sundays.

"Yet in the face of this weakness of church life and of all the defects of parish social life, the religious spirit is keenly alive in the people.

Papal Concordats

By J. W. POYNTER

AMONGST the many problems of present-day Europe that of the relation of the Roman Catholic Church to civil States is one of a good deal of importance. The aim of the Papacy generally is to get those relations regulated by "Concordats"; as in Italy a few years ago, and as was attempted in Germany, Yugoslavia, and elsewhere. What exactly are Concordats?

There is a widespread idea that they are simply treaties, like other such agreements between sovereign powers. That, however, is far from being the case. In everything with which the Papacy is concerned there is found to be something unusual, redounding to the privilege of the clergy. Concordats are no exception to that rule. The *Catholic Encyclopædia* (Vol. IV, p. 197) says: "Canonists and publicists do not agree about the nature of a Concordat, and, consequently, vary much in the definition they give." This much, however, is certain: A Concordat is an agreement between Church and State. "The purpose of a Concordat is to terminate, or to avert, dissension between the Church and the civil power" (*Catholic Encyclopædia*, IV, 196-7).

"Absolutely speaking, bishops, as true rulers of the Church vested with the authority to make laws strictly so called, can also make Concordats on all matters falling within their jurisdiction. In past ages they have often exercised this right. . . . At the present time bishops do not possess the power of making Concordats; it is reserved to the Pope" (*Catholic Encyclopædia*, IV, 197-8). What is the nature of the obligations imposed on both or either of the parties to a Concordat? It is here that we come to a rather extraordinary state of affairs—and which is little realised by most people. The *Catholic Encyclopædia*, continuing its article on Concordats, says: "To explain the nature of Concordats three theories have been proposed (a) The legal theory, that advanced by the regalists; (b) the compact theory, which regards the Concordat as a bilateral contract; (c) the privilege theory, according to which a Concordat has the force of a privilege on the part of the Roman Pontiff, but of an obligation on the part of the civil ruler." Of these, the "legalist" theory means that Concordats are mere concessions by the State (which is superior to all Churches), and can be revoked at the will of the State; the "contract" theory holds that Concordats are contracts between Church and State as equal powers; and the "privilege" theory (the converse of that of the "legalists") that Concordats are mere concessions by the Pope (who is above all States), and can be revoked at the will of the Pope. The *Catholic Encyclopædia* says: "The privilege theory is that according to which Concordats, if we regard their general character and the bulk of their contents, lack for the most part the force of a true contract, and are to be considered as imposing an obligation on the civil power alone, while on the part of the Church they are merely privileges or concessions granted by the Roman Pontiffs. This view, which counts among its recent staunch defenders Cardinal Tarquini, seems to rest upon surer grounds than the others." The reason it is the best theory is because (a) the "legal" theory presupposes that the State is above the Church—a false assumption; (b) the "contract" theory assumes that Church and State are equals—which again is a wrong idea; but (c) the "privilege" theory assumes that the Church is above States—which is the right view. We come to this, then: When a State engages itself in a Concordat with the Pope, it undertakes an agreement by which the Pope may not be really bound, but by which he will regard the State as being bound! In fact, which ever of the three theories is correct, it remains equally true that Concordats are undesirable. It is bad for a State to enter into an agreement by which it will not think itself really bound (theory the first). It is bad for a State to regard the head of one religious body as equal to the State itself (second theory); and it is bad for the State to enter into an agreement by which the other party may not feel really bound (third theory). Is not the logical conclusion this? States should avoid Concordats with the Pope, and treat all religious sects simply as groups of citizens, equal before the law.

Reunion Notes

"In things essential, unity; in things non-essential, liberty; in all things charity."

The Universal Week of Prayer Never has the Universal Week of Prayer been more widely or solemnly observed. The deepest thoughts of men's hearts have been stirred by the events occurring in the world. Human help to meet the sorrows of hearts and to heal the wounds of nations and races is in itself unable to achieve the desired end. It needs the Divine aid, and the sense of fellowship and strength, in the practice and power of united prayer. Differences that divide are seen to be small in the face of the great fundamentals that unite. Thus, during the Week of Prayer, Churchmen and Free Churchmen have bowed together in prayer, and from thousands of centres united prayer has been made to God for the needs of the Church and the world. In every part of the United Kingdom this spirit was evidenced, and it was felt that the World's Evangelical Alliance was rightly guided in the framing of its programme for the Week. Is it vain to hope that the manifestation of brotherhood will continue during every week of the year? Surely as we see ourselves surrounded by all that prepares for the destruction of human life in deadly combat, the call of the Heavenly King becomes clearer, and His great high-priestly prayer that they all may be one calls for its fulfilment. We are one if we are true to Him, and it is for us to extend the realisation of that unity. If the strife of tongues were to be converted into one great chorus of praise, how much happier we all should be. We all can give reasons why this is not the case. The time has come for the recognition of the fact that ecclesiastical exclusiveness cannot be of God, whose Holy Spirit works where and how He lists; and brings forth His fruits in men of all Churches and types. Surely all bowed together in common prayer must influence those who hold that the God who heard their prayers is their common Father, and in Him all are one. The day of union in one great organised Church may be a dream. The day when we all realise that we in our several Churches are in reality brethren—members one of another—in the one great universal Church of Christ, is always here, and only calls for recognition.

Unity in Faith and Fact But what is this great unity? We are not merely one in Churchmanship or even outward fellowship. We are one because we are all "born again"; we are one in the perfect substitution of the Lord Jesus Christ; we are one in the personal acceptance of His great and finished work of Atonement; and, let us hope, that we are all one in the graciousness of the Redeemer's smile and love. Is it not a unity of heart and a unity of spirit and condition? Then it is also a unity of petition. Sometimes in our prayer gatherings, if the Lord Jesus Christ were to come into any assembly and ask us each one, "What will ye that I should do unto thee?" there would be a hundred different answers, because we come burdened with a hundred different needs. But there is one clamant reply which could be heard, for at this time all are united in one supreme prayer, that there may be a disbanding and uprooting of the people that delight in war; that God may give us, in His own time, a righteous and permanent and, if it be His will, a speedy peace; that the time may soon come, when men "shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning-hooks."

Then, surely, it is a unity of medium. We all come to the throne of grace by one way. All our prayers are perfumed by, and presented in, the righteousness of Jesus Christ. There is one sin-bearer, and there is one prayer-bearer too, and the Bearer of our sins is the Bearer of our prayers—Jesus Christ the Righteous. The Israelites brought the lamb, but the high priest offered it. And so does our High Priest. We have one Medium, and He is with us always, presenting each and all of our prayers before His and our Heavenly Father in the power of His great Name.

There is not only this unity of medium, there is a unity in the channel of the blessing coming down to us. It was Vaughan, of Brighton, whose fragrant ministry is remembered to this day by many, who said: "If Jesus is the Bearer of our prayers going up to God, Jesus is the Bearer of the answers coming down from God; and He Who makes

the upward petition acceptable to God makes the downward answer sweet and pleasing to men." The channel of blessing is Jesus Christ. We may thank, then, God not only for the spirit of unity, but for the wonderful spirit of prayer which is being poured out to a notable degree upon the Church of Jesus Christ universal.

New Year Resolutions We are all familiar with New Year resolutions, which may be proverbially shortlived. Such resolutions, however, do good rather than harm, and even if they are not all kept, at least there remains the exercise of trying, and, perhaps, the resolve to further endeavour. We have been much helped by a brief article (from an unknown correspondent) in the *British Weekly*, in which the writer says:—

"The other day I was speaking to a sportsman. One thing he said to me was that one of the secrets of success in partridge shooting is that, instead of firing at the covey (firing 'into the brown,' as he called it) you should single out your bird and aim at it. And exactly so with New Year resolutions. One secret of success is that, instead of being content with vague generalities (being 'better,' 'kinder,' 'more diligent in business,' 'more earnest in religion,' and so on) we should fix on some one perfectly definite thing and make *it* our aim.

"In that connection I had a very interesting experience some years ago in my Christian Endeavour Society. At a meeting towards the close of the year, after saying something along the above line, I suggested that the members of the society should, individually, put down in black and white some perfectly definite resolution for the New Year, and that then, if they cared, they might drop their papers into my letter-box.

"The result was, as I have said, extremely interesting. I received seven resolutions, which were altogether delightful and well worth recording. (I cannot recall whether these were all the resolutions that were sent in, or only some of them; nor can I recall whether any of them were suggested by what had been before us during the year. But that's immaterial.)

"Here are the seven:—

"*1. I resolve that I will rise in the morning in time to make a good beginning for the day.* Clearly that means business; the recognition that religion, so far from being a mere trifle or plaything, is a serious and important business, calling for time and thought and care and worth making some sacrifice for.

"In no better way can that spirit be given expression to than in the quiet, solemn resolution to take time (to make time) to begin the day with God. The time may be longer or it may be shorter, but even a short time, provided it is really spent in God's presence, will give tone to the whole day."

Drudgery Divine The correspondent continues: "*2. I resolve that I will accept my daily work as from God.* That will redeem the most ordinary and common-place and irksome toil, lifting it from the low and depressing level of task and drudgery into the radiant light of the will of God. We must never let ourselves forget that our Lord was as really doing His Father's will when He was working as a carpenter in Nazareth as when He was going up and down the country teaching and preaching and working miracles. And that has a message of comfort and cheer and inspiration that never grows old. 'As to the Lord': 'A servant with this clause makes drudgery Divine.'

"*3. I resolve that I will be a cheery Christian.* Delightful! A cheery Christian is a fine testimony to his religion and his Lord. Scarcely anything would do more to convince the unbelieving world to-day that religion is a reality—and a reality worth having—than the recapture of New Testament cheeriness and Christian joy. 'The joy of the Lord is our strength'; and not our strength only, but our best contribution to Christian apologetic.

"*4. I resolve that I will give a minute in the middle of the day to prayer.* In the spirit of the psalmist when he said: 'Evening and morning and at noon will I pray and cry aloud.' And that is far from wasted time. 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength,' and from His presence will go back to the work and warfare of life with new hope and fresh energy.

"*5. I resolve that I will endeavour to do at least one act of kindness every day.* The Boy Scouts' resolution! Three hundred and sixty-five gleams of sunshine thrown into hearts and homes and lives.

Surely a well-worth-while chapter in the year's story! Beside it the making of money or the finding of pleasure sinks into insignificance.

"6. *I resolve that I will give a tenth of my income to God.* And that endeavourer would find (what thousands have found before—and what thousands are finding to-day) that nine-tenths of one's income with God's blessing will go further than ten-tenths without it. If Christian people believed that there would be no deficits in our church funds.

"The old cry needs to be sounded out again all over our land: 'Bring ye all the tithes into the store-house and prove thee now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.'

"7. *I resolve that I will take note of special blessings during the year.* 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.' 'Count your blessings' and take a note of them. At the end of the year (and many times during the year) it will warm your heart to look back and read the record of God's abounding kindnesses. 'And it will surprise you what the Lord hath done.'

"Such were the resolutions of those Endeavourers for the year on which they were about to enter. *What is to be yours for 1939?*

Revive the Cottage Meeting

How many of us have conducted or even been present at a cottage meeting? The writer has rejoiced in this experience in more than one country. We rather think this type of meeting is being practised in Roumania to-day until the withdrawal of an unjust decree concerning public worship makes the larger congregation possible. Mr. Hugh Redwood has been writing recently on his experiences of the cottage meetings. He recalls attending such a meeting thirty-seven years ago and narrates:—

"It is thirty-seven years ago that I went to my first cottage meeting, but the remembrance of it is still as vivid as ever. Six miles out from Bristol, I walked to take part in it; six miles out and six miles back in the evening. It was Sunday and there were no trains on that branch line then. Even had there been I should have walked, for we held it was breaking the Sabbath to ride in a train. In case of real need we could ride in a tram, but not until after mid-day dinner; and even then some of us felt uncomfortable, though maybe that was the fault of the dinner.

"A twelve-mile walk is not much in my line to-day, but I often think I would gladly attempt it to capture once more the same experience. There were only six of us in the little low-ceilinged room that Sunday, but to one of the six came conversion, and there was no doubt about its reality. If the proportion of one in six held good in the average church congregation, what a reawakening of spiritual life this country would quickly see. Is it possible that the revival of the cottage meeting and its adaptation to urban conditions might help to produce that awakening?" . . .

Mr. Redwood concludes: "We read of the early Christians in Acts ii, 46, that they broke bread from house to house. They had come into an experience of God the Holy Spirit which made them realise how truly they all belonged to His family. They were at home in every house where He was the acknowledged head.

"So they passed from one house to another, breaking their bread, and sharing, no doubt, their witness; and the natural concomitant of it all was that they continued 'daily with one accord in the Temple.' If we did the same thing I believe we should have the same result.

"As things are to-day, the private-house meeting affords one of the best means of making contact with a great unevangelised population. Its main purpose is less to preach than to demonstrate, and since those who attend, as a rule, are either earnest Christians or honest inquirers, the conditions are fulfilled in which the Spirit of God is best able to work.

"Consequently things happen. Men are convinced, and nothing is more certain than that the man convinced of Christ will seek the fellowship of others of like conviction. And surely it is in this way that the Church of Christ should be 'edified.'

"There can at least be little doubt that the Church so built will be a living Church."

The B.B.C. and Astrology We are not among those who overlook the grave differences of opinion which must from time to time confront the headquarters officials of the B.B.C. We sympathise with them all, especially the Director of Religious Programmes. At the same time we think, as some of our correspondents seem to think, that it is not the place of the B.B.C. to pander to the modern craze for the exploitation of the unseen, as, for instance, the cult of Spiritualism, or, as we think it should be named, Spiritism. The curse and judgment of God was upon all such practices in the earliest days of Bible history: it remains to-day. Those who practice necromancy or spiritism do so at their peril. We cannot too earnestly urge upon parents and teachers their duty to impress upon youth generally the physical as well as spiritual wrong of all and any such tendencies. Certain newspapers appear to exist largely upon the silly practice of brainless people who eagerly devour, sometimes whole pages devoted to horoscopes and fortune-telling. Those who pander to this sort of thing live in a free country, and if their distasteful minds are so occupied it can only be regretted by those of higher and deeper knowledge. But we ought to be able to sound a resolute protest against having this kind of thing served up on the programmes of the B.B.C. And this is what is suggested. A great morning newspaper remarks:—

"Astronomers, professional and amateur, are indignant at a B.B.C. proposal to broadcast talks on astrology. These talks are to be introduced in a new series of monthly programmes called 'Birthday Party,' beginning on January 23.

"Stars of film and stage whose birthdays fall in the particular month are being invited to the studio and a well-known astrologer will tell them—and, incidentally, listeners with birthdays in the same month—what the other stars have in store. Miss Bebe Daniels, the American film actress, is to be the first visitor.

"Dr. H. Spencer Jones, the Astronomer Royal, is writing a protest to the B.B.C. against this proposal.

"'I think it is a very foolish thing for the B.B.C. to do,' he said to me yesterday. 'Astrology is not a science, it is pure empiricism. It is extraordinary how many people are gulled by the so-called horoscopes, and anything that the B.B.C. might do to make people think there is something in it is to be deplored.'

"An official of the Royal Astronomical Society said: 'If the B.B.C. like to gull the public I suppose that is a matter for them to decide.

"'As a society we are strongly opposed to it and regard it as definitely harmful. It is a survival of the mediaeval ideas, when people thought that they were the centre of the universe and that the stars were created for their benefit.'"

We advise and ask our readers, without delay, to write careful and courteous letters to the B.B.C. Director of Programmes protesting against this innovation. Ask members of Parliament to do the same. And it would be well if the presidents of Christian organisations could be asked to send in similar protests, at the same time naming the range and influence of their work and, if possible, the number of members they represent.

Premier's Visit to the Pope We deeply regret the visit of Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Halifax to the Pope. If, on political grounds of expediency, this visit was desirable, then we can only pray God to bring order out of confusion. The incident has aroused widespread uneasiness among others than those usually called Protestants. During the visit opportunity was provided and taken for the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary to meet the recently appointed "Apostolic Delegate" to Great Britain. We understand that this appointment is not unconnected with Catholic Action, which is a heavenly caricature with an earthly intent and meaning. We speak strongly on a matter which ought not to be left to what are known as the Protestant Societies. It is a matter touching upon the whole fabric of Church and State in the light of the Protestant Reformation and the National Church as being by law both Protestant and Reformed. We note that questions in Parliament (December 7th) about this appointment were given and answered as follows:—

"Colonel Wedgwood asked the Prime

Minister whether an Apostolic Delegate from the Vatican has yet been appointed to this country; on whose initiative the appointment is being made; what his functions are; and when, and for how long, an Apostolic Delegate has been appointed in the past?

"Mr. Butler: The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. An Apostolic Delegate is an ecclesiastical official appointed to carry out certain ecclesiastical duties; he enjoys no diplomatic status or privileges. His appointment is a question for the Vatican alone. There has not hitherto been an Apostolic Delegate in this country, but for some time past such Delegates have been appointed to Canada, Australia, South Africa and India.

"Colonel Wedgwood: Will the hon. gentleman say on whose initiative this appointment was made? Did the initiative come from the Vatican or from this country? Secondly, are the Apostolic Delegate's functions to include any propaganda in favour of the Holy War against the people of Spain?

"Mr. Butler: On the question of the initiative, as I said in my original answer, the appointment of the Apostolic Delegate is a question for the Vatican alone. With regard to the right hon. gentleman's second supplementary question, I do not think I can say anything in answer to that."

We quote from a contemporary:—

"In the report of the interrogations in the House of Commons a Roman Catholic member interposed with the assurance that 'this gentleman who has been appointed is an Englishman and worthy of all the true traditions of the English name.' Neither the nationality nor the character of the selected Delegate really affects the issue. The Delegate comes to England as the direct representative of a Pope whose highest ambition it is to reduce England once more to the Roman obedience. It is in furtherance of this aim that all the steps which we enumerated in a leading article last week have been taken by successive Popes. The appointment of an 'Apostolic Delegate' is but one more step in the same direction, and Protestants must oppose it not on personal grounds but as a matter which vitally concerns the spiritual and temporal liberties of the British people. And in opposing it they have a right to ask what part the British Government has played in bringing it about, and in demanding a plain straightforward answer."

The Creed of an Evangelical

We congratulate the Vicar of Islington upon the very successful gathering—the one hundred and twelfth — at Westminster, on January 10th, of the Islington Clerical Conference. The subject for this year, "The Creed of an Evangelical," is an important one, and those who wish to study the papers in detail will be glad to learn that they are to be issued in book form (National Church League Book Room, 1s. 6d. post free). In the course of his Presidential Address, Mr. Hewitt reviewed the outlook on Church and State, and we quote from the concluding paragraphs of his speech a testimony, one hundred years old, but valid and vital in every word to-day, when the great central truths (even the Virgin Birth of our Divine Lord) of the Evangelical creed and faith are called in question, and some of them openly repudiated within the Church. Mr. Hewitt said:—

"The work involved in the preparation for this Conference has its compensations, particularly in the contacts which it gives me with brethren of the clergy, often unknown to me, in many parts of the country. One has written to me this year, expressing his regret that owing to advanced age he cannot be with us, and assuring us of his prayers. He says: 'I have been a regular attendant (except during the Great War) for about fifty years, and found the meetings very helpful to one's parochial work.' That is one main test of the value of our gathering. The assembled together of men like-minded, serving in the ministry of our beloved Church, with opportunities for the renewal of old friendships and the contracting of new ones; above all, the stimulus which comes from our common study and our corporate approach to our dear Lord and Master; these make our Conference well worth while. Difficult indeed in these days is our ministry, but He Who has called us to it can endue us with resources equal to every need.

"In July, 1839, Daniel Wilson, Bishop of Calcutta, sent home a message to be read at the meeting of the Islington Clerical Conference in the following January. From it, as I close, I would quote a few sentences: 'Now brethren, I commend myself to your prayers, and love, and sympathy. . . . In my sixty-second year I cannot look for prolonged capacity for public duty. May I be found with my lamp burning, and my loins girded,

that when my Lord cometh, I may open to Him immediately. There is nothing worth living for but Christ, and He is indeed worth living for, and worth dying for, too . . . Nothing but the atonement of Christ for justification—nothing but the Spirit and sanctifying grace of Christ for obedience to the will of God—nothing but the power of Christ for victory over every enemy—nothing but the blessed example of Christ for the pattern of lovely and meek holiness—nothing but the mercy of Christ for the hope of everlasting life at last. As I grow older, my religion is much more simple—none but Christ. None but Christ.'

"Such was the creed, such the like of Daniel Wilson, founder of this Conference, a century ago. May it be ours to be accounted worthy in some measure to have our place in this Evangelical succession, loyal to all truth, loyal to Him Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Evangelistic Evangelicals A speaker once said that the only way in which the Evangelicals will make headway in England is by being as Evangelistic as they are Evangelical. There is profound truth in this saying. Are we nowadays ceasing to be Evangelists? If so, the reason is not far to seek. Even where least suspected, the agnostic temper prevails. Preachers are sure about nothing, and talk round a subject instead of appealing to the certainties of revelation and the great facts that are written on every page of the New Testament. They doubt this and they question that; they give the opinions of scholars and refrain from expressing their own view. They are afraid to state the Truth as it is written, and end by giving their hearers the idea that all is in a state of confusion. A well-known Irish preacher once criticised a sermon in the words: "There was not as much Gospel in it as would save a tomtit." He was not irreverent—he was a Bishop of distinction—but he saw that the pulpit had no force, no message, no appeal to the hearts of men sin-stricken and powerless to save themselves. There is a great appeal in the Gospel—a warning and a remedy. Do men believe that there is such a thing as sin that alienates men from God? Are they convinced that the Saviour of mankind came into the world to save men from sin and to give them the power of an endless life? Is the Cross to them the meeting-place of sinner and Saviour, the altar on which the Son of God was crucified, the great Atoner and Absolver? Has man in their eyes ceased to be immortal, and is Christianity simply a philosophy of sound morality and a means by which men can console themselves by the thought that the Saviour failed to do His work on earth, and by His sacrifice showed that man may fail but may live in the hearts of others as a great Example? This is not the Gospel of St. Paul; it is not the teaching of Him Who faced the Cross after Gethsemane. He died to save sinners. Take this from the New Testament and the book becomes as meaningless as many sermons called Christian are. The evangelistic note must be boldly struck if the Churches are true to their mission.

Christian Giving We took note of a letter in a recent issue of a contemporary in which the writer, referring to the decision of the world of entertainments to devote one-tenth of their profits on a certain day in January to the alleviation of the distress of Jewish refugees from Central Europe (a memorable act in the history of charity) says:—

"Pondering this splendid gesture, one cannot but feel it to be somewhat humiliating that a biblical practice should be invoked in this emergency by a secular organisation, while the Churches, which claim to be guardians of divine truth, have abandoned God's own method for the furtherance of spiritual and benevolent objects.

"Why should it need a dire crisis and a non-religious body to draw the attention of the Churches to the 'sacred tenth' which God required should be reserved for the furtherance of His purposes in the earth?

"Under the old order, each Israelite recognised one-tenth of all his income to belong to the Lord, and he faithfully paid it into the treasury to be dispensed by the priesthood for the conduct of God's work. Moreover, as the Lord blessed them, they also gave freewill offerings to the extent of another tenth or even more of their income, so that means were always available for necessary works of charity and benevolence.

"If all who call themselves Christian were faithfully rendering to the Lord tithes and offerings in the proportion that ancient Israel with their lesser light and privileges gave, there would be no lack of means for the spread of the Gospel or for the mitigation of human suffering on every hand."

World Mission Notes

Tambaram 1938 It is too early to say anything concerning the issues from the Missionary Conference at Tambaram. In the meantime, we record the following message forwarded to the Conference in session at Tambaram, and the reply received from the chairman, Dr. John R. Mott:—

"Dr. Mott, Chairman,
International Missionary Council,
Tambaram, Madras.

"Council of the World's Evangelical Alliance in meeting in London send to World Missionary Conference assembled Tambaram fraternal greetings and assurance of prayerful remembrance now and throughout the forthcoming Universal Week of Prayer, that under the guidance of the Holy Spirit the Conference may help to further through the work of Missions the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and give new impetus to the work of evangelisation and the faithful preaching and teaching of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.—Henry Martyn Gooch, General Secretary."

The following reply was received:—

"Madras Christian College,
Tambaram, Madras.
December 30th, 1938.

"Dear Mr. Gooch,—Your message of greeting to the World Meeting of the International Missionary Council at Tambaram was presented in Plenary Session and received with the most lively satisfaction. It added distinctly to our sense of world-wide fellowship to be remembered by you in this gracious way.

"The Meeting, which came to a close yesterday, transcended our highest expectations. It constituted one unbroken chain of marked answers to prayer.

"With renewed expression of our appreciation of the vital part you have thus had in contributing to this result, I am, faithfully yours,

(Signed) JOHN R. MOTT."

China Missions in the Light of the War We asked the Editorial Secretary of the China Inland Mission to send us some late news of the situation of Missions in China under the present war conditions. This request has been graciously replied to through Mr. Rowland Hogben, who writes:—

"No one can scan the clouds which are bringing unexampled suffering and ruin upon the millions of China without being tempted to cry with the Psalmist, 'Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Is His mercy clean gone for ever?' To the man of faith, however, there is discernible a silver lining to those clouds, an assurance that the Sun of righteousness still shines in His strength.

"That the Japanese invasion would create difficulties in the carrying on of normal missionary work was to be expected. With vast areas laid waste, with cities and villages utterly demolished and their inhabitants scattered, it was inevitable that congregations should be broken up and evangelistic and pastoral work interrupted. It is not surprising, when one considers the magnitude and character of the Japanese military operations, that a great deal of Mission and Church property should be destroyed or occupied by troops, and it was natural that mission schools and training institutions should in many cases have to be disbanded, at least for a time. With the railways and other means of communication in the hands of the invaders or the objects of fierce bombardment, missionaries have frequently had to travel in circumstances of great peril, at greatly increased expense, and by untried and widely circuitous routes.

Divine Deliverances Lead to New Opportunities "But, when all these and other necessary evils have been taken into account, it is only fair to say that missionaries and Chinese Christians have not suffered as such. They have simply shared in the general distress caused by the invasion. It is right to add, to the glory of God, that there is a great and growing record of providential deliverances, times when the hand of the Lord has been manifestly put forth to protect those who called upon His Name. There do not appear to have been any concerted efforts on the part of the Japanese to search out and penalise either convert or missionary; indeed, there has sometimes been a consideration shown for those missionaries who have been able to remain through the

hazardous periods of siege and other active military operations.

"In such times as those the Mission and Church premises have often been a refuge to which overwhelming numbers of Chinese have resorted; and, whereas in former days it was necessary to go out and to compel them to come in, the preacher has had at hand daily for weeks at a time a large audience with time to listen to his message and with hearts prepared to receive the unfailing comfort of its truths.

"Another result of the war, comparable to the result of Herod's attitude to the early church, has been that among the millions of Chinese forced to leave their homes there have been Christians who have gone everywhere preaching the Gospel. In some instances they have brought fresh life and strength to small and struggling churches in the far interior.

China Missions and the Refugees "Needless to say, these evil times have afforded opportunity also for the testimony of good works. In the refugee camps, among the wounded and the sick, many Chinese have been reached and won by a ministry of kindly helpfulness, which has opened their hearts to the constraining love of Christ.

"Lastly, this great national emergency has thrown into strong relief the Christian testimony of the Generalissimo and of Madame Chiang. They stand together at the head of the nation as those whose trust is in the living God, and the influence of their fearless witness is incalculable.

"Upon the contrast between such leadership and that which at present exists in Japan one cannot now dwell.

"But, as Madame Chiang remarked to a missionary during an air-raid alarm, 'God has eyes. He can see and He knows that our cause is righteous. The darkest hour comes before the dawn. It is easy to trust God when all goes smoothly, but when everything is dark then it means faith.'"

Co-operation and Unity in Portuguese Missions We have received from the Rev. Eduardo Moreira, President of the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance, and Secretary of the Centre of Christian Co-operation in Lisbon, some interesting reflections on the work of Portuguese Missions in Africa.

"Since 1935," Senor Moreira writes, "there has been functioning in Lisbon the Centre of Christian Co-operation, which seeks to make good the basis of these movements, representing the activities of the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance (a branch of the World Evangelical Alliance) and of the Missionary League, which, with a budding mission of its own in S. Tomé, also cares for the interests of the foreign missionary societies working in Portuguese Africa. . . . . Missionary effort in our colonies dates from close on a hundred years ago, and it commenced in Macau, where Morrison, a pioneer of missionary work in China, is buried. Macau too had been his stepping-stone to Canton in 1807. In Africa the start was made in the Congo, in 1878, under the protection of King Peter VII of Congo, and with the approval of King Luis I of Portugal. Mission work, which later spread along the coasts of both East and West Africa, has for long been accused of denationalising the native, by which is meant, not that the native is drawn away from the traditions and characteristics of his tribe, but that he is turned aside from becoming Portuguese by assimilation. Even Portuguese Protestants were influenced by this accusation, until, through contact with foreign missionaries visiting Portugal to study our language and to become acquainted with ourselves, their suspicions, which were never more than vague, have been allayed.

"A few years ago the writer, who had been keenly interested in the subject since 1913, had the opportunity to spend about a year visiting the coasts and hinterlands of Angola and Mozambique, to which he has given the general designation Portuguese Bantuland in consequence of the racial affinities he observed and the seeming need that a single cultural programme be drawn up for Mozambique (Eastern Bantuland) and Angola-Cabinda (Western Bantuland). On this trip he was able not only to gain proof of the goodwill of the missionaries and of the intelligent patriotism of the natives educated by them (doubtless the reader will agree that there is such a thing as unintelligent patriotism!) but also to acquire bases for a better understanding of these devoted servants of Portugal and for them to be made better use of in her interests, instead of, as hitherto, not even receiving gratitude for their services.

"It was after this trip the C.C.C. was set up. Its growing files specialise in matters

colonial in general and missionary interests in particular. Scandinavian, Swiss, British, American and South African have found in the Centre a source of information about things Portuguese. Talks on subjects of special interest to them are arranged for their benefit. Private teachers are procured for them and the Centre acts as liaison agent between them and the authorities when necessary. Current legislation is carefully studied and the attention of the authorities is called to such legal deficiencies or misinterpretations as may be observed.

"Publications for use in the mission field are produced, and advice is given to missionaries regarding Portuguese literature likely to be of use to them, and as half a million people come under the influence of the 52 mission stations or are resident in the 2,000 Christian villages of Portuguese Bantuland, such information is of growing interest, since, for a native to come into the sphere of mission activities, or further, to become a member of the African Church, demands, generally speaking, that he be able to read and write."

Some Adverse Facts It is not all happy news of missions which comes from Portuguese Africa. From Mozambique word of growing opposition to the work of foreign missionaries comes to hand, and permission for the entry of the Scandinavian Alliance missionaries who have been studying Portuguese in Portugal continues to be refused.

In Angola a new decree has been promulgated, according to which only European Portuguese qualified teachers may undertake school work, so many mission schools are faced with the likelihood of having to close down.

Those taking part in a recent political meeting in Lisbon are reported to have undertaken to do all in their power to oppose foreign mission work in Portuguese territory. These are matters calling for concern—and prayer.

Moravian Missions No body of missionaries has been more heroic than those sent out by the Moravian Church. Among Societies supported in this country the Moravian Missions has a noble record, and is international in its working. The self-denying labours of the Moravian brethren, whose work has been so richly blessed by God, is beyond praise. It is satisfactory to note that missionaries of many nationalities have worked together harmoniously, for "the valuable possessions they have in common with one another weighed more heavily with them than those which are of only passing value. They have been able fully and heartily to co-operate for the spread of the kingdom of God, whilst preserving their allegiance to their earthly fatherland." The Annual Report of the Moravian Missionary Society sounds a note of Christian confidence and inspires the reader, making him realise why the Moravian Church has been privileged to do so much for God.

The Bible in India—Romance of a Book The Rev. J. S. M. Hooper, the British and Foreign Bible Society's Secretary for India, declares in his Annual Report that the problem of illiteracy is one of the most pressing from the Bible Society's point of view, and observes that it is being seriously tackled in some provinces. Of the men, 13.9 per cent. can read and write their own language, but the proportion of literate women is only 21 per thousand. "One of the outstanding difficulties in the promotion of literacy is the lack of a sufficient motive to appeal to the ordinary villager, and here the Christian has a great advantage: his aim is definite and sufficient—every man should be able to read the Bible. Mr. Hooper points out that the dangers to which a predominantly illiterate community is exposed are obviously very great, and that too much emphasis can hardly be placed upon the urgent necessity of making every Christian literate. There was a total circulation of the Scriptures in India and Ceylon last year of 1,203,000, an advance of 14,000!

Hindu Festivals and Colportage Hindu festivals provide a splendid opportunity for colporteurs to mix with the crowds and sell their Gospel portions. One of the most successful is Kulumani Babu, who was led to his work by reading a Gospel. Kulumani lived near Puri and worked as a merchant's clerk. Among his companions was a lame man who did any odd jobs he could find. One day while this man was repairing the thatched roofing of a mud house, he found in the roof a small book which had evidently been there for a long time as it was well covered with soot. Being unable to read, he gave the book to his

friend. Kulumani read it with great interest and told his lame companion about the wonderful truth which was written in it. Being sure that it was the book used by Christians they both tramped to a village named Pipli where they knew some Christians were living. It was not very long before the truth lit up their souls and they both became Christians. Kulumani then became a colporteur that he might take to his own people the grand news of salvation which had captivated his own life.

South American Missionary Society The World's Evangelical Alliance has long been interested in missionary work in South America, and it rejoices in the fellowship and co-operation of all agencies representing co-operation and unity and the work of evangelisation. Among these the South American Missionary Society has an honourable record of devoted missionaries, among them Captain Allen Gardiner, who we believe was the founder of the S.A.M.S., and Mr. Barbrooke Grubb. The Society is celebrating this year its jubilee. For fifty years the S.A.M.S. has laboured in the cause of missions in South America. It seeks to make known the Gospel to the Indian tribes and other natives of South America, and to British subjects. Everywhere doors are wide open, and what has been already accomplished gives assurance of a splendid future.

At a special jubilee service held in St. Bride's Church, Fleet Street, the sermon was preached by the Rev. Bryan Green, Vicar of Brompton. He chose as his text the words of the apostle in Phil. iii. 15, 16, " That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world. Holding forth the word of life." Mr. Green said that with the turning away from Christianity on the part of so many in Europe to-day, the new spiritual life needed to save the world might very likely come, in part, at any rate, from some of the young churches overseas. He asked, What kind of a church, whether here at home or in the mission field, was going to save the world. The Church if it was to be used of God to-day must shine as a light, and it must hold forth the Word of life. It must possess a supernatural life, a life that could not be explained on purely human and material grounds; and unless they as Christians gave evidence of that supernatural life they were never going to win the world for Christ. Work in the mission field would fail unless there were Christian communities here and there who shared in the life of God. The Church and the world needed more than anything else in these days those who were living in personal relationship with God, from whose lives there shone forth the light of an inward peace, because of the assurance they had in these troubled days that God was their Father and Christ was their Saviour. Mr. Green went on to point out that if they would win the world they as Christians must manifest the light of a disinterested love; they must be ready to serve others, not only by preaching the Gospel, but by living the Gospel in the schools and in the hospitals.

Central Asia Calling It seems unbelievable that there should be 34,000,000 people living in the world to-day who have never heard of the wonderful salvation wrought out for them on the Cross of Calvary 1,900 years ago!

Yet so it is in Central Asian lands—in Afghanistan, Chinese and Russian Turkestan, Tibet, and many inter-tribal territories adjoining these lands.

For forty years the Central Asian Mission has been praying and working to bring Christ to these peoples. Its missionaries heal the sick, teach the children, translate and distribute the Scriptures, and are ever seeking in various ways to reach out to the unreached.

Progress has been slow. Sickness has thinned the ranks of the missionaries. Political conditions have closed some of the " doors " that were once wide open. As it was in our Lord's day, " the labourers are few," but the call for new missionaries comes clearly and urgently from these midnight lands.

In the time of Nestorius, prosperous churches flourished in these countries until waves of Moslem and Buddhist error swept away every vestige of spiritual life, and " The Church on Fire " ceased to shine and to burn out for God.

For these souls, living in terrible bondage to sin and enshrouded in dense spiritual darkness, our Lord died. Are we sufficiently concerned about their need to pray for those who are earnestly seeking to win them for the Saviour? Do we care enough to be willing to give or to go?

Books Worth Reading

RANDALL DAVIDSON, Archbishop of Canterbury. By G. K. BELL, Bishop of Chichester. (Oxford University Press. 21/- net.)

This is a new and one volume edition of the biography of a great Christian. Personality, charm, friendliness, statesmanship shine out from the pages of this volume, and the Bishop of Chichester has laid the whole Church, and not merely the Church of England, under obligation to him for the monumental task he has achieved. Readers will find in the early chapters much that is of absorbing interest, in the person of Archbishop Davidson, in his relations with the State, and notably Queen Victoria, with whom he enjoyed close associations, and in whom the Queen placed great confidence. There are references to matters of deep interest to Evangelicals as such, including reference to the outbreak of the great war and the part the Archbishop took in seeking to guide the religious forces and influences, notably by conferences at Lambeth Palace, in which the World's Evangelical Alliance was included, and, we may add, it was these early manifestations of unity in a great and righteous cause which prompted and finally led to the great united Queen's Hall Prayer Meetings, maintained by the Alliance during four years. In these the Archbishop took part, and notably on two occasions, when he presided at gatherings devoted (following upon the death of Lord Roberts) to the subject of the National Revival of Family Prayers. Reference is made to conference with the General Secretary of the Alliance on the subject of the appointment of a Day of National Prayer, and to the Archbishop's subsequent conversations on the subject with the Prime Minister, Mr. Lloyd George, which, if negative at the moment, were fruitful later in the adjournment of Parliament to St. Margaret's, Westminster, for a special service of National Prayer concerning the War and its issues. The Revised Prayer Book, twice rejected by Parliament, is dealt with at length, and forms an extremely interesting part of the volume. Dr. Bell's admirable biography should be read by all, especially as it can now be obtained in a cheaper edition.

PERFECT FREEDOM. By REV. T. C. HAMMOND, M.A. (Inter-Varsity Fellowship. 5/-.)

The Rev. T. C. Hammond, whose book *In Understanding Be Men* has had such a favourable reception, has excelled himself in this present volume. In it he approaches the subject of Christian conduct in a manner similar to that of his previous work on Christian doctrine. After clearing the ground by surveying the principles of the Naturalistic schools of Ethics, and demonstrating in a masterly fashion the unique claims of Christian Ethics, the author proceeds to an examination of the application of New Testament principles to the main phases of everyday life.

In view of the modern problems which are becoming daily more pressing and of the confusion of thought which exists among Christians as to what is to be considered as the "Christian Way," it is a book whose message all Christians would do well to master. It is essential that those who are seeking to train and lead modern youth should have a clear understanding as to the teaching of the New Testament regarding conduct.

Here is a book which, seeking to allow the Divine Command its proper authority and to relate it to all departments of life, brings home the Sovereign power of God in a way which has so often been lacking in books which set out to present the Christian principles of conduct. Not for centuries has there been in Europe and the world a greater need of the wholehearted application of Christian Ethics.

The author has borne in mind throughout that many of his readers will be without a theological or philosophical training. Yet the ground covered, the evident scholarship, and the clear thinking which characterises every argument, substantiates the claim of this volume to be a thoroughly up-to-date and reliable introduction to the subject.

THE HOLY BIBLE. REVISED VERSION. (British and Foreign Bible Society. 2/6.)

Here is a good and great half-crown's worth, a new clear type edition of the English Bible, Revised Version. Produced specially for the Bible Society by the Oxford University Press, this edition is printed in a clear brevier type on a thin opaque Bible paper. It is also issued in an attractive range of bindings at moderate prices. This attractive volume is bound in a superior quality art cloth with coloured top and gilt title on the back; it is obtainable in two colours: blue and maroon. It is printed in paragraphs with the Revisers' Marginal Notes at the foot of the page and contains four maps. The Bible Society here provides a Revised Bible in a readable type and attractive form at a price within the reach of all. It is specially suitable for use in schools.

CONGO JOURNEY. By H. L. HEMMENS. (Carey Press. 2/6.)

If you cannot travel to the Congo read this book. It is the account of a journey of 4,000 miles through the heart of Africa, by aeroplane and train, by canoe and on foot. Mr. Hemmens, who is a member of the Council of the World's Evangelical Alliance, found much concerning Christian unity to interest and enlighten him during his travels, and visiting the Diamond Jubilee Conference of the Congo Protestant Council at Leopoldville. Here (through the Council) "the forty or so missionary societies with nearly 1,300 missionaries made up of twelve nationalities, placed at 234 stations, are able to speak with one voice on matters of common concern. It is necessary at times to approach the Government on questions of administration, to make protests when its policy tells hardly against Protestant Missions, and to oppose with effect instances of persecution and cruelty to Protestant Christians by Roman Catholics." This is good reading and information and, in fact, the whole volume is delightful in its witness to the Gospel of Christ as the power of God unto Salvation, and to the gracious hand of God in guiding the development of Missionary plans by "pioneers who first took the Light to the Congo, and of their successors who have kept It burning."

EVANGELICAL CHRISTENDOM

We gladly welcome and recommend two books on the work of the Holy Spirit:—

THE HOLY GHOST AND THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. By PROFESSOR KARL BARTH. (Frederick Muller. 5/- net.)

Dr. Karl Barth is undoubtedly one of the most distinguished theologians of to-day, and cannot be too grateful to those who have undertaken the translation of his works into English. This translation, undertaken by Professor Birch Hoyle, is a volume of importance, treating, as it does, upon the influence and work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual Christian.

THE COMFORTER: A Devotional Study. By MONTAGUE GOODMAN. (Paternoster Press. 2/6.)

This is a delightfully fresh exposition of the person and work of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter. The author deals first with the work of the Holy Spirit in relation to the individual, and then passes to His function in the Church of God, showing clearly that the remedy for the hindrances from which the Church is suffering to-day is a return to the guidance and ways of the Holy Spirit, Who was given that He should "guide us into all truth."

ANTICHRISTIAN SPIRITISM. By J. NAYLOR. (Thynne. 2/6.)

We welcome any volume helping to expose the sinful cult of Spiritism, and the author by quoting entirely from the writings of Spiritists has brought forward valuable evidence that Spiritism is "dangerous, devilish, and devastating in its attempts to destroy the very foundations of the Christian faith." The rapid growth of Spiritist Churches gives evidence of the need for such volumes as this, which provides material for those who may be faced with the task of opposing the evil teachings of Spiritists.

All books for review under this heading should be addressed to the Editor "EVANGELICAL CHRISTENDOM," 19, Russell Square, London, W.C.1.

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Members of the World's Evangelical Alliance are kindly asked to bear in mind that the extension of the influence and work of the Alliance can be effectively secured if they will personally seek to induce their friends to become Members or Subscribers. Each year there is loss of income through the death of Members or others who have supported its home and foreign work. This loss can only be reinstated as new Members and supporters are introduced.

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